

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

Little Tree of the Poor
3630 W. 30th Ave
Denver, Colo.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

LIEUTENANT-COLONEL M. DE S.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

TURN TO HIS HEART

MEDITATIONS

On Our Lord Jesus-Christ and on Holy Communion
According to the Spirit of
SAINT FRANCIS DE SALES

Address Orders to
MONASTERY OF THE VISITATION
Ridge Boulevard and 89th Street
BROOKLYN, N. Y.

IMPRIMATUR

Leodii, 9 Oct. 1923

L. DESEILLE

Vic.-Gen.

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Sisters of the Visitation, Brooklyn, N. Y.

LETTERS OF APPROBATION

LETTER OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL MERCIER

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE,
MALINES

November 12.

You have had the kind thought of sending me the admirable little volume "DRAW NEAR TO JESUS" and I thank you deeply for it.

The book is really all enamelled with treasures from Holy Scripture, the writings of Saint Francis de Sales and of Saint Margaret Mary.

And when one reflects that it was written by a soldier for another soldier, that it is the history of the tenacious and victorious pursuit of a soul rooted in agnosticism and probably given up to despair, by another soul who triumphs over his resistance and finally conquers him, one is moved and edified.

Your book is undoubtedly destined to do great good. Please accept the expression of my respectful and devoted remembrance.

D. J. CARDINAL MERCIER
Archbishop of Malines.

LETTER OF HIS EMINENCE CARDINAL BOURNE

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE,
WESTMINSTER, S. W.

Feast of St. Michael
September 29, 1923.

I glady associate myself with the words in praise of this book, which have already been written by His Eminence Cardinal Mercier, and by His Lordship the Bishop of Annecy. I know it in the French original text, and I rejoice to learn that it will now be accessible to those whose mother tongue is English. It will bring comfort and courage to many souls, and lead them to understand better, and to put into practice, the spiritual teachings that are contained in the lives and writings of the Saints whose names are ever associated with the thought of Annecy and the history of the Order of the Visitation.

May their powerful intercession make this book fruitful in grace to all who read it.

FRANCIS CARDINAL BOURNE
Archbishop of Westminster.

LETTER OF HIS GRACE ARCHBISHOP CURLEY

ARCHBISHOP'S HOUSE
408 N. CHARLES ST.
BALTIMORE

September 26, 1923.

I am greatly pleased to learn that an English translation of the little brochure "Allez à Jésus, allez à son coeur" is about to be published. This little work, so deeply imbued with the spirit of Saint Francis de Sales and of Saint Margaret Mary, is a perfect gem and in placing it within the reach of our English speaking people, you are rendering a real service.

I have no doubt but that once it will become known, it will have the same success as it has had in France and that it will be the means of bringing many souls nearer to the Sacred Heart of Our Lord.

Wishing you therefore success in your pious undertaking, I remain

Most faithfully yours in Xto.,

MICHAEL J. CURLEY
Archbishop of Baltimore.

LETTER OF HIS LORDSHIP
Mgr du BOIS de la VILLERABEL,
BISHOP OF ANNECY

This little book, which came to light solely out of a thought of pure charity in behalf of a poor sufferer, with the aim of calming his anguish and above all of leading him to the Only One who can heal all sorrow, has met with a success quite unexpected by its charitable author. Our Lord has evidently blessed the work.

Offered to the public after encouragements and approbations, unsolicited, it has found among its pious readers, an astonishing success. Must we seek the reason in the doctrine of which it is, under various forms, a complete exposition? Perhaps so. More than ever now, in a world tired out and wounded by so many disappointments, souls seem to hunger and thirst for the divine, which never deceives! This book came therefore in good time, since it revealed to those souls the infinite treasures of the Heart of Jesus. It gave them, and in abundance, the substantial nourishment of which they stood in need.

There is also, we are happy to believe, another reason for this success. Willingly we perceive therein a special design of Providence. This adorable Heart "has so loved men"! But in

return He wills to be loved by them! To attain this end everything may become an instrument in the service of His divine will. He has therefore deigned to make use of these pious meditations, which simply repeat, but in an accent of the deepest faith, some of the titles He has to our love. For this, may He be blessed a thousand times!

The first editions of the little work being out of print, a new one, called for on all sides, became necessary. It is for us particularly agreeable to bless it, in offering it to the numerous souls who await its perusal. They will draw therefrom a more profound knowledge of the divine riches of the Sacred Heart. In this renewed acquaintance may they equally find fresh motives for loving Him with a stronger love and for serving Him with a more generous courage.

This is our cherished hope. May our most gentle Master, Jesus, realize it for the good of souls so dear to Him, for His greater glory, so precious to us!

FLORENT MICHEL MARIE
Bishop of Annecy

Annecy, Easter Sunday, April 16, 1922.

TO THE READER

These pages were not intended to be printed. They were written off hand for an officer, who died a victim for France.

In defending our dear country, Captain L** was thrown from his horse, the fall was so violent that it caused serious injury to the nerve centres, which resulted in a most terrible malady. Eminent physicians of our large cities being consulted, were unanimous in declaring the evil incurable, and as rare as intolerable they even asked themselves how the victim could endure it.

We, the friends of the poor patient, were in consternation. What could we do to alleviate his condition, to aid him to suffer? **MAKE A SAINT OF HIM** was the response of our agonizing hearts.

Captain L** was not hostile to religion, but he did not know Our Lord. We must then make him penetrate into the **MYSTERY OF DIVINE CHARITY**, unveil to him the secrets of love hidden in suffering. It was towards this end that all our devotedness was directed.

But the Captain lived very far away, in a small hidden corner of the Soane-et-Loire. Alone, blind, paralyzed, tortured, without a friend to do him good, he had only two servants near him. His distress was great. I then had the thought to condense in some meditations, which would be read to him page by page, all that I could find to comfort him. I wished to put into his heart more faith, more confidence and love, more abandonment to the Divine Will, more esteem for suffering, more thirst for the Holy Eucharist, more intimate life with Jesus.

I gleaned from the Holy Scripture and from some consoling authors, particularly St. Francis de Sales, whatever would aid me in my apostolate near this dear martyr.

The little grain germinated. Jesus revealed Himself to Captain L**, who eventually rejoiced to be like His Saviour: A MAN OF SORROWS. His tortures—the word is not too strong—he offered for the holy Church, for Priests, for France, for the army, and wrote to his brothers in arms: Formerly I walked in honor and apparent happiness... Today, I am in humiliation and sorrow, but I walk with Our Lord; I am perfectly happy.

Every day I understand better the words of Saint Margaret Mary: "Life without our Lord is the greatest of miseries."

The Captain died like a saint, a victim of the Sacred Heart for the priesthood and for the army.

Having attained its end, my manuscript was laid aside and forgotten. Providentially, it fell into the hands of R. P. Matheo Crawley-Boevey who strongly urged having it printed, for the glory of Our Lord.

May the Divine Heart, through the intercession of the Immaculate Heart of Mary, bless these humble pages and render them fruitful for souls. May all who read them receive, like Captain L**, the measure full, pressed down and overflowing, of the love of the Heart of Jesus.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE DESIRES ONLY YOUR LOVE

INVITATION

Lovest thou me?.. Lovest thou me more than these?
(St. John, xxi, 15-17).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, thou knowest all things: thou knowest that I love thee.
(Ibid., 17).

God is Charity, and all that God operates, He I St. John, iv, 16. operates in Charity. Love is the beginning and end of all the works of God... *God so loved the world!* St. John, iii, 16. This is the motive of the Incarnation. *Jesus having loved His own who were in the world, He loved them to the end:* This is the reason of the Euch- Ibid, xiii, 1. rist...

“ Ah! my God, how deeply ought we to imprint this Thy love in our memory: is it possible that I have been loved and so tenderly beloved by my Saviour!...” The “ amiable heart of my God has thought” of my soul, “ loved it, and procured it a thousand means of salvation, even as many as if there had been no other soul in the world to think of; as the sun shining on one place of the earth enlightens it no less than if it shone on no other: so in the very same manner is our Lord

solicitous for all His dear children, thinking of each of them as though He had forgotten the rest.

He loved me, says St. Paul, and delivered himself for me; as if He said: for me alone; as if He had done nothing for the rest..."

"But when did He begin to love you? Even when he began to be God. But when did He begin to be God? Never, for He has always been without beginning or end, so also has He always loved you from all eternity; and therefore He has prepared for you the graces and favors which He has given you. He says by the Prophet: *I have loved thee with an everlasting love,* (He is speaking to you as well as to other) *Therefore I have drawn thee, taking pity on thee.*"

O Charity too great! O ineffable goodness of a God Who gives Himself to us and Who only asks in return the gift of ourselves! Lord, since we have received all from Thee, since all Thy thoughts are turned towards us to do us good, grant that we, in our turn, may give Thee all, that we may take Thee for the only Object of our thoughts and affections. Since Thy love pursues us everywhere, to pour upon us Thy mercies; grant also that everywhere we may find Thee, to receive them. May our life be consumed in love for Thee.

Love is the golden chain which binds us to God and God to us; it is the weight with which He weighs all our acts. "All sanctity consists in the dilection of God. All that is done by love is love", says St. Francis de Sales. To wish to love, is to love! Much better to BELIEVE in love, to confide in love, is to love.

Galat., II, 20.

Jerem., XXXI, 3.

Introd. to a devout Life, Part V, ch. XIII.

" My child ", says the Saviour to each of us, according to the author of the Imitation, "*give Me thy heart*, such as it is. I am He Who hath invited thee; I have commanded it to be done; I will supply what is wanting in thee; come and receive Me.. Thou hast need of Me, not I of thee.. Neither dost thou come to sanctify Me, but I come to sanctify and make thee better... Thou comest that thou mayest be sanctified by Me, and united to Me. "

Book IV, ch. xii.

Jesus is our FRIEND, but He wishes that we also should be His FRIENDS. I will not now call you servants, but *My friends*. He wishes to be to us a St. John, xv, 15. SAVIOUR-FRIEND!... We can only be to Him *misery-friends*. — To accomplish the work of His merciful love, Jesus needs to have miseries to relieve and few are willing to be nothing, to be this misery all abandoned to the Saviour. We wish to be something before God and before men; we become agitated, disturbed... We cannot accept a state of helplessness.

My Saviour, I desire to abandon my nothing to Thy All, to give Thee my misery and my helplessness in order that "they may serve as the throne of Thy Mercy and the seat of Thy Allmighty Power." Then I shall be Thy *friend*.

St. Fr. de Sales,
VI Conference
II.

To be the *friend* of the Saviour, is also to trust in Him; to be sure of God in the midst of the most terrible tempests; it is to be SURE of the love of Jesus, sure that He does all for our greater good and that He knows how to turn *all things to the good* of souls that are His, sure that for them Rom., viii, 28.

Cap. xiii, 15.

obstacles are changed into means: *Though He slay me yet will I trust in Him!* says Job. Behold a true friend!

Many, in the midst of consolations and joys, are friends of Our Lord and know how to say to Him: **I TRUST IN THEE!** I ABANDON MYSELF TO THEE; but in the midst of anguish and darkness, when all is overthrown and crumbles away, how few say: Lord! I trust in Thee. I know not how, I see nothing, I understand nothing, but I am sure of Thee!

My Saviour, we wish to be Thy true friends, with whom Thou mayest accomplish all the designs of Thy Father. We shall always be Thine, we will have confidence in Thee. We know it is Thou Who dost will or permit all, and that we have all in Thee.

And we have known, and have believed the charity, which God hath to us. God is charity: and he that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him. In this is the charity of God perfectly with us, that we may have confidence in the day of judgment... Let us therefore love God, because God hath first loved us.

¹ St. John, iv, 16,
17, 19.

Let us frequently receive our **ONLY FRIEND** in Holy Communion, and let us repeat to Him the word of love of Saint Margaret Mary: "My Life, my Love and my All, Thou art all mine, and I am all Thine."

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE WISHES TO BE SOUGHT

INVITATION

Whom seek ye? (St. John, 1, 38).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Master, where dwellest Thou?
(Ibid.)

Whom seek ye? This was the question the Saviour addressed to the two disciples who began to follow Him. They answered: *Master where dwellest Thou?* We no longer seek Thee, they seem to say, we have found Thee; tell us where Thou dwellest. And Jesus said to them: *Come and see.* Jesus addresses this same question to each soul, and the sovereignly free choice we make of Him is His glory. *Where dwellest Thou?* The Saviour has three dwellings: CALVARY, where He redeemed us by His sufferings and death; the EUCHARIST, where He enriches us with His merits, and HEAVEN, where He will be our eternal recompense. Let us go and find the Divine Master in His Sacrament of love, the memorial of His Passion and Death, the pledge of our eternal beatitude. Let us remain with Him all *this day*, that is, all the day of this present life which is the vigil of eternity.

Jesus loves to be sought, to be desired. One day Saint Margaret Mary Alacoque, being deprived of Holy Communion, poured out her sighs and desires before the tabernacle. "My daughter, said the Saviour to her, I have heard thy sighs, and the desires of thy heart are so agreeable to Me, that if I had not instituted My divine Sacrament of love, I would institute it for love of thee, in order to have the pleasure of lodging in thy soul and taking My repose of love in thy heart. I take so much pleasure in being desired, that as often as a heart forms this desire, so often do I look upon it lovingly to draw it to me."

To desire the Saviour is to possess Him; just as to believe in His love is to love Him. The Good Master languishes, in some sort, until we seek Him. "When wilt thou come with an open heart?" He said to Sister Jeanne Benigne Gojos.* "It is I Who excite thee to supplicate Me. Ask, for I can refuse thee nothing. What dost thou fear? I love dilated hearts, which allow themselves to be expanded with love and confidence." Jesus loves to be sought, not only when we go to Communion, but at every moment. He loves to make us acknowledge that we can do nothing without Him: *Without Me, you can do nothing*, He says to us. The Creator loves to see His creatures needing Him for everything; they are not in order unless their recourse to God is continual. *Seek the Lord and thy soul shall live.*

Ps. LXVIII, 35.

St. John, xv, 5.

* Lay-sister of the Visitation, deceased in the odor of sanctity in Turin, 1692. (See her Life by Mother de Provane, Part. III, ch.v.)

Our Divine Saviour acts with us like a good mother with her little child. He hides Himself that we may seek Him, He leaves us in anguish to oblige us to cry out to Him. "Our Saviour permits us to be disturbed only to urge us to invoke Him more ardently."

When Jesus allows us to fall, it is a happiness to Him to raise us up; but, as Saint Francis de Sales remarks, He acts like a good Mother, He is very careful to let us fall only on grassy places where we will do ourselves no great harm; in dangerous places He does not let us go.

"Never does our good God abandon us except to hold us more closely; never does He leave us except to guard us more carefully; never does He struggle with us except to yield Himself to us and to bless us."

Let us call Our Lord to our help when we have committed a fault; our imperfections will then serve for our perfection. Though we should fall a hundred times into some fault, if we return to God as many times, and begin again to do good, our falls will have no evil consequences. *The Lord shall direct the steps of the just; when he shall fall he shall not be bruised, for the Lord shall put His hand under him.*

"Never be troubled or anxious about anything," wrote Saint Margaret Mary, "not even about your faults, simply humbling yourself when you have fallen into them. Say quite confidently to the most amiable Heart of Jesus: "O my only Love, pay for thy poor slave and repair the evil I have just committed. Make it turn to Thy glory, to the

St. Fr. de Sales,
Lettres, v. XVI,
p. 64.

St. Fr. de Sales,
Lettres, v.
XIII, p. 91.

Ps. xxxvi, 23, 24.

Advice, v. II, 659.

edification of my neighbor and to the salvation of my soul... Then, keep your soul in peace and begin again to do right. In this way our falls are often very useful to humble us and teach us what we are."

*Letters, v. II,
p. 411.*

Ps. xxxv, 4.

St. John Chrysostom.

Ps. civ, 3, 4.

"Although we have offended Him, God is nevertheless our Father; however irritated He may be, He loves His children. He wishes only one thing, not to chastise us for our offenses, but to see us converted and appealing to Him. If we make the least movement of conversion, which we must do to recognize that we have sinned, He opens the cataracts of His mercy. He pours Himself out on us as an ocean of love. The more graces we receive, the more He rejoices, and disposes Himself to lavish them on us still more abundantly. Our salvation is His abundance, His munificence towards those who call upon Him. The Psalmist thus expresses this thought: *He is sweet and mild and plenteous in mercy to those who invoke Him.* He made Himself poor to be able to enrich us. He submitted to so many sufferings in order to encourage us to seek Him, to pray to Him... God is willing to wait untiringly, until we call Him, and He has never closed His ears to our petitions when we have called on Him in a proper manner. Let us then call out to Him as He desires to be called" ... *Let the heart of them rejoice that seek the Lord! seek ye the Lord and be strengthened: seek His face evermore.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR SANCTITY

INVITATION

*For them do I sanctify Myself
that they also may be sanctified
in truth (St. John, xvii, 19).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Father the hour is come, glorify
Thy Son (Ibid., 1).*

“I am He Who gives all sanctity”, says our Lord by the author of “The Imitation”. Pro-
claiming the praises of Blessed Perboyre, one of his panegyrists made his audience understand that all our sanctity is in Jesus Christ, our Lord. “In the course of the pages of profound asceticism which he has written”, said the orator, “Blessed Perboyre uses a phrase, which in advance resumes his too short career and his glorification”.—“Jesus Christ”, he says, “is the form of the predestined: the saints in heaven are only portraits of Jesus Christ, risen and glorious, just as on earth they have been the portraits of Jesus Christ suffering, humiliated and agonizing.” “That resemblance to our Lord is necessary for salvation,” continues Father Tissot, “is in effect an elementary and fundamental doctrine of Christianity. The Word Incarnate is the type to which those ought to be

Book IV, ch. XII.

conformed who wish to keep in their soul the image of God, the moral dignity of a Christian and their rights as coheirs with the Savior to His eternal kingdom. Our sanctity will be in proportion to the perfection of this conformity. There is no other difference between an ordinary Christian and a saint than that which exists between a rough sketch and a master-piece both copied from the same original. This copy is not a superficial work, like a photograph; it is the inmost transformation, more or less perfect, of the life of a man into the life of the Man-God."

"This work is the result of divine action and human activity combined; through His preventing grace, the part of God is a communication of the life of the Saviour to the soul as much more abundant as it finds less obstacles and more co-operation. The part of man is faith and love: faith, applying itself to contemplate the traits and disposition of the Word made flesh, and to make them enter the heart; love, which identifies itself with Him; "for," says St. Francis de Sales, "the soul lives more in him whom she loves than in him whom she animates."

"But let us not forget," said the Blessed Perboyre, "that if Jesus Christ is the type of our perfection, He is still more the means by which we can reach this perfection. Let us then often turn to Him and say: Lord Thou willest that I should work at imitating Thee and I desire it with all my heart; but consider that I am only a bad apprentice, that I can do nothing without Thee."

Let us not believe that our infirmity is an

obstacle to the sanctity of the Saviour pouring itself into us; St. Paul wrote to the Corinthians: *For see your vocation, Brethren, that there are not many wise according to the flesh, not many mighty, not many noble: but the foolish things of the world hath God chosen, that He may confound the wise; and the weak things of the world hath God chosen that He may confound the strong; and the base things of the world and the things that are contemptible hath God chosen, and things that are not, that He may bring to naught things that are; that no flesh shall glory in His sight. But of Him are you in Christ Jesus, Who of God is made unto us Wisdom and Justice and Sanctification and Redemption.*

I Eph., 1, 26-30.

O my soul, leap for joy! thou art rich, thou hast a Saviour!

“All the weaknesses, the spiritual and corporal infirmities that are in us, cannot prevent us from reaching sanctity. Do you think that saints are not made now as formerly? Most assuredly, they are, it is always the same method that must be employed: we are saints only by self-renunciation, by death to self. Do you think that the saints did not feel the repugnances of nature? The saints had passions, more lively perhaps than yours, but they placed their confidence in God and worked with courage and generosity at conquering themselves.”

“To be saints, we have only to empty ourselves of self, we have only to be obedient, to have patience in contradictions. In fine, it is not difficult to be a saint, we have only to say *Yes* to every-

thing; *Yes* to all that God asks of us; *Yes* to all that Obedience demands; *Yes* to all that our neighbor desires; and then we shall be agreeable to God."

Sanctity, is the *gift of self* made to God. It is the "I" decreased, diminished, mortified. It is Jesus substituting Himself for this "I", transforming us into Him; in a word, it is His divine life replacing ours little by little.

A great means for acquiring sanctity, is Holy Communion. Saint Francis de Sales wrote to a soul who did not dare approach the holy Table on account of some distractions: "Truly, we must not refrain from Holy Communion on account of this kind of evil; for nothing will collect your spirit better than its King, nothing will warm it as much as its Sun, nothing will smoothe it so much as its balm." And to a man of the fashionable

Vol. XVIII.
p. 185.

world: "During the twenty-five years that I have served souls experience has taught me the all-powerful virtue of this divine Sacrament for fortifying souls for good, for exempting them from evil, for consoling them, and in a word, for deifying them in this world, provided that It is received with suitable faith, purity and devotion." The good Saint says also: "Hares become white by eating snow; and we, by eating Him Who is holiness, will become saints."

Vol. XVI, p. 57.

Introd. to a Devout Life, Part II, ch. xxi.

It is especially in Holy Communion that Our Lord communicates His sanctifying love. Therefore I will communicate frequently, O my Saviour, that I may receive the torrents of Thy love!...

Venerable Mother Chappuis.

Thou wilt impress Thyself on me, Thou wilt be
my *Wisdom, my Redemption, my Sanctification.*

Exalt the Lord our God, for the Lord our God
is holy. Everyone that hath his hope in Him Ps. xcix, 9.
sanctifieth himself, as he also is holy. I St. John, iii, 3.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR SUFFICIENCY

INVITATION

Without me, you can do nothing.
St. John, xv, 5).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

I do nothing of myself. (Ibid.,
viii, 28).

Divine Providence loves to aid those who are destitute of human means and who have experienced their own insufficiency.

We must say: I see nothing, but, O my God, Thou seest for me; I can do nothing, but Thou canst do all for me... We must love to have nothing.

In the course of a day, we meet with happiness or misfortune. In either case let us say: Our Lord is my Sufficiency. It is in happiness, when we believe we have something, that we must resort all the more to the Divine Sufficiency... In everything we must have recourse to Him... To see and feel that we are insufficient would avail nothing, if we did not believe that the good God wishes to help us. The philosophers recognized their insufficiency all their lives, but this availed them nothing... As to ourselves, let us repeat boldly: "Acknowledging my insufficiency, I hope to meet

the sufficiency of God"; and let us do nothing without the DIVINE ALL-SUFFICIENT!

As a child receives everything from its mother, so ought we to receive everything from our Lord!... Let us not allow anything to hinder our entire yearning towards Him Whom we have chosen and Whom we seek as uniquely good to our souls. Because of Him, we must wish that all that is not He should be retrenched, so that God alone with our soul and our soul alone with God, we may live in the dilatation of Charity which is in Jesus Christ our Lord. Our good, is to COUNT ON GOD FOR EVERYTHING.

Our Lord said one day to Sister Jeanne Benigne: "If you have nothing, you are the mistress of everything, and you possess everything in possessing Me... Take then in Me whatever you wish, and offer it to Me for yourself and for whomsoever you wish." The humble lay sister knew that it was above all in Holy Communion that she received this divine Sufficiency; which made her say: "My hunger for this divine nourishment is extreme, I have an ardent desire for it ... I go to this holy Bread, starving, hungry, begging; but before I receive It I find myself invested with graces, enriched, filled to overflowing with good, and afterwards satiated by Him Who gives Himself to me."

*Her life, Part. III
chapter v.*

Oh! let us understand, that we have everything in our good Saviour. "Teresa alone is nothing, cries out the illustrious foundress of Carmel; but Teresa and Jesus, that is everything." By which she means to say: I am poor in myself in relation to

God, but rich in God in relation to myself. *Our sufficiency comes from God. Of his fulness we have all received.* St. John, 1, 16.

However there are hours of anguish... And at these times, let us understand how to wait for that which our Lord is thirsting to give us, recalling to us His promise to Saint Margaret Mary: "Assistance will fail you only when my Heart fails in power." *Works, v. II, p. 192.*

Let us be well convinced that everything is profitable in God; His delays are as beneficial as His gifts. Just as our Lord profits by everything with regard to His creature, so the creature profits by all in God. It is incredible how the smallest things serve to lead us to God. "God is above all", wrote Saint Margaret Mary. "He is often pleased to make use of the smallest and most despicable things for the execution of His greatest designs, as much to obscure and confound human reasoning, as to exhibit His power which can do all that He pleases." *Letters, v. II, p. 456.*

St. Gertrude was astonished to see her divine Spouse overwhelm with graces one of her daughters, whom she esteemed little worthy of the many favors with which she was gratified. "Gertrude, why would you deprive Me of the glory which redounds to Me from doing good to this soul?" answered the good Master. "Understand that the weaker, the more impotent the creature is towards which I incline, the more I am praised and exalted by all other creatures."

Our God is truly the Good God of the miserable; He is the *Sovereign Good*, writes St. Francis de

The Heart of St. Gertrude.

Letters, Vol. XIII, p. 340.

Sales. And one of his daughters adds, that when we want to take the Good God by His weak side we must pray and expect . . . The intelligence of man cannot conceive what power prayer has over the Heart of God; it changes His wrath into benevolence . . .

Divine assistance is more necessary to us than respiration is to human life; we can obtain it easily, provided that we desire it.

"The Prophet, inspired with this thought, shows us that God is always ready to fill us with His gifts: We shall find Him *disposed like the aurora of a beautiful day*. Every time that we go to Him, we shall find Him expecting our request. If we draw nothing from the inexhaustible source of His power, it will be entirely our fault."

May we, O good Savior, touch Thy Sacred Heart, in praying, in having unceasing recourse to Thee, in expecting *all* from Thy bounty. We know that daring is more agreeable to Thee than the least fear. Didst Thou not say of Thy spouse St. Gertrude: "There is nothing that Gertrude does not expect from My Goodness, neither is there anything that My Goodness will not do for her."

We will not fear to extend our confidence too far, and after having received the Sacrament of Thy love, we will sing with the Psalmist: *The Lord has been my protector, He brought me forth into a large place, He saved me because He was well pleased with me. The Lord is the protector of my life, whom shall I fear? . . . Of whom shall I be afraid . . .*

When we shall have entered Heaven, we will

Osee, vi, 3.

St. John Chrysostom.

The Heart of St. Gertrude.

Ps. xvii, 19, 20.

Ps. xxvi, 1.

see that our *Divine All-Sufficient* is still our Savior, and we shall repeat eternally the word of the Prophet King: I was *satisfied when Thy glory* appeared to me. We will sing: *Lord, Thou art He Who crowneth us with mercy and compassion.*

Ps. xvi, 15.

Ps. cii, 4.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR REDEEMER

INVITATION

*Put in thy finger hither, and see
my hands; and bring hither
thy hand and put it into my
side. (St. John, xx, 27).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

My Lord and my God! (Ibid., 28).

Jesus retains His wounds in Heaven, because the remembrance of His sufferings is so precious to Him that He wishes to have a memorial of them and the marks engraven on His body, even in the state of glory. He wishes the Blessed to have the memory of them always present, as the object of their gratitude.

By His glorious wounds, Jesus has given us peace, He has made a new covenant between His Father and us: with us, by the application of His sufferings and His death; with His Father, by the superabundant reparation that He has offered for us. He has made Himself "the companion of our miseries, in order to make us hereafter the companions of His glory, showing in this way the riches of His goodness, by this copious, abundant, superabundant, magnificent and plentiful redemption."

Rom., II, 4, IX, 23.

Ps. cxxix, 7.

“Indeed, Adam’s sin was so far from overwhelming the divine benignity, that on the contrary it excited and provoked it: so that, by a most sweet and most loving reaction and struggle, it received vigor from its adversary’s presence, and as if recollecting its forces for victory, it made *grace to superabound where sin had abounded*; whence the holy Church, by a pious excess of admiration, cries out, upon Easter eve; O truly necessary sin of Adam, which was blotted out by the death of Jesus Christ! O blessed fault, which merited to have such and so great a Redeemer!”

*Tr. on the love
of God, Book
II, ch. iv.*

O Jesus, Who hast reunited us to Thy Father by Thy Heart and Thy pierced hands, grant that we may have no other retreat than Thy sacred wounds for time and for eternity.

A good Italian peasant prayed in this manner: “My God, I have committed many sins, I owe Thee much, but I offer Thee the blood and the merits of Thy Son; pay Thyself and return the rest to me.” This man understood the superabundant riches of the Redemption.

We are nothing but sin, but by our Redeemer we become just. St. Paul tells us this: *If then any be in Christ a new creature, the old things are passed away; behold all things are made new. All things are of God Who hath reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ... Since, by love of us, He has treated Him Who knew not sin as if He had been sin itself, that we might become just by the justice of God.* Without the merits of our Lord, the Eternal Father will either not regard us, or we will be only objects of indignation to His eyes.

*II Cor., v. 17, 18,
21.*

It is only by His divine merits that we can receive good movements and form holy desires. Incapable of all by ourselves, we cannot do anything except by our Savior. He says: Without Me, you can do nothing... Throughout the whole day He works in us to make us capable of being united to Him and of forming *One* with Him.

St. John, xv, 5.

St. Francis de Sales remarks that just as a "wonder-worker" proclaims his arrival in a city and the maladies that he cures, so our divine Redeemer, before He entered this world, proclaimed everywhere His coming and the evils that He cured. First by His Prophets: *I will bind up that which was broken, and I will strengthen that which was weak. The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, He hath sent me to teach the poor, and to cure the broken hearted...* For Thou wilt save the humble people. Then by His own mouth: *Come to me all you who are weary.* But above all, when He was called JESUS; for physicians do not always cure, and hence, we must not call Him a physician, but Savior, since His prescriptions are infallible...

Sermons, v. VII,
pp. 185, 192.

Ezech., xxxiv, 16.

Luke, iv, 18.

Ps. xvii, 28.

Matt. xi, 28.

"Since this is so, O Savior, O Redeemer, O good God, I can very well say to these people on Thy part: *Draw near to the Lord, and you will be enlightened, and your faces shall not be confounded, for He receives sinners.*"

Ps. xxxiii, 6.

Luke, xv.

A young man of an excellent family of N..., had the passion of stealing; in vain was every effort employed to cure him. In order that justice might be re-established and nobody suffer from this sad habit, the brother of the criminal, who possessed

a large fortune, being informed of the thefts committed by his brother, followed after him and returned with generosity all that had been stolen—This is what Jesus does with His poor brethren: He follows wherever we have passed, and repairs everything, if with a contrite and generous heart we supplicate Him to do so. Our miseries are then so many occasions for our Lord “to pass by” and to dispense the treasures of His infinite charity, to show Himself truly the Repairer. Though we should constantly contract new debts towards divine Justice, we are sure, that in having recourse to our Savior, we shall rob God of nothing: we have a REDEEMER and our *Redeemer*

Isaiah, XLIX, 26. is the mighty One of Jacob.

“This great artisan of mercy converts our miseries into graces, and makes of the viper of our iniquities, the salutary theriac of our souls.”

From the morning watch even unto night, let Israel hope in the Lord; for with the Lord there is mercy, and in Him a plentiful redemption.

Ps. cxxix, 6, 7. When, by Holy Communion, we possess Jesus Christ in our hearts, let us address to the eternal Father this prayer of the Psalmist: *O God, our Protector, regard us in the face of thy Christ, our Redeemer.*

Ps. xvii, 2, 3. Let us frequently have in our heart and on our lips the word of Job: “*I know that my Redeemer liveth! liveth to assist me, liveth to enrich me with His merits.*

Chap. xix, 25. *I will love Thee, O Lord, Thou art my strength, my support, my refuge, my deliverer, my REDEEMER.*

Ps. lxxxviii, 10.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS THE GUEST OF YOUR SOUL

INVITATION

*Come down quickly, for this day
I must abide in Thy house.
(Luke, xix, 5).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Lord I am not worthy that Thou
shouldst enter under my
roof, but only say the word.
(Matt. viii, 8).*

Our Lord by His Incarnation, has made Himself the Brother, the Friend of His creature, the Companion of his exile, so that each soul may enjoy His divine familiarity. How many times, desirous of communicating to us the secrets of His love, He comes to rap at the door of our hearts! and that His majesty may not frighten us, that His greatness may not intimidate us, He becomes so poor, so small, that He is constrained to say to us: *Come down.*

Let us understand the lesson of the Divine Master. He says to us: *Come down*, that is to say, **MAKE YOURSELF THE SMALLEST**.—In addressing this divine word to Zacheus, our Lord adds immediately: *I wish to lodge in thy house to-day*. This is the consequence of self-abasement: every time that the soul descends by humility, Jesus

takes a new possession of it; for our Savior finds the little ones everywhere, because the little ones always find the way to His Heart.

O Jesus, hidden God, annihilated God, we adore Thee under the Eucharistic veil which conceals Thee from our eyes; blessed veil which permits us to embrace Thee, to press Thee to our heart, as a friend embraces his friend. Lord Jesus, be blessed for having made Thyself so little, for having placed Thyself within the reach of our weakness. If Thou hadst kept the appearance of Thy greatness and Thy majesty, Thou wouldest often have been feared, but Thou wouldest not have been so passionately loved. — Grant us the grace of responding to the advances of Thy infinite love.

Lord, I am not worthy that Thou shouldst enter into my house. “He who loves, says our Lord by the author of *The Imitation*, prepares the best and most beautiful place for the friend by whom he is loved, because in this the affection with which we receive the loved one is made manifest. Remember, however, that you cannot acquit yourself of this preparation by the merit of your own works, even if you should employ therein a whole year and if you should have nothing else in your mind. But it is by My goodness alone and by My grace that you are permitted to approach My table, like a poor person who would be invited to the table of a rich man and who had nothing else to give him for his benefaction but to humble himself profoundly and to thank him for it. It is I who have invited you, who have commanded you

to approach, I will supply what is wanting to you. Come, receive Me."

Book IV, ch. xii.

"A Spouse", said our Savior to St. Gertrude, "prefers sometimes to behold the white and delicate hand of his spouse to seeing it enveloped in a glove. In like manner I often take more pleasure in the humility of the communicant than in his devotion." — And to Sr. Jeanne Benigne Gojos: "Remember that where misery and poverty abound, there also I will pour forth My mercy and the riches of My grace."

*Revelations of
St. Gertrude,
p. 195.*

*Her life, Part. I,
ch. viii.*

These sentiments of profound humility inspired St. Francis de Sales with such exclamations as these: "My God, I wonder at myself that I am still so full of myself after having communicated so often! Oh, dear Jesus, be the child of our bosom, that henceforth we may aspire, and feel only Thee. Alas! Thou art so often in me, why am I so little in Thee? Thou enterest into me, why am I so often out of Thee? Thou art in my bosom, why am I not in Thine to seek therein and gather up this great love which inebriates hearts?"

*Letters, v. XV,
p. 76.*

But, some may object, it seems that we do not know what to say to our Lord when we possess Him. Well, let us say to Him: My Jesus, I do not know what to say to Thee, I do not know how to talk to Thee. — Let us do as did the good peasant of Ars, who, fixing his eyes on the sacred Host, repeated: I LOOK AT HIM AND HE LOOKS AT ME!

Here also, the incomparable Bishop of Geneva is the great master: "We must, as much as possible, caress the holy Guest that we have re-

ceived within us, . . . for this is the time when He is accustomed to speak more sweetly to our heart and to make it partake more favorably of His graces. Therefore we should speak to Him of our necessities, our powerlessness and our imperfections. We must treat with Him of our designs, intentions and the pretensions we have to His love, of the hope we have in Him and finally we should give ourselves to Him as He has given Himself to us."

Moreover, let us not forget that our dryness, our coldness signify nothing. "To taste the sweetness of God is not solid love for Him", said St. Jane de Chantal to her daughters; "but to humble one's self, to die to self, to live without self-interest, to be known to God alone, this is to love God truly, for all these are infallible marks of love."

St. Margaret Mary gives us this advice: "If we find ourselves in an abyss of distractions, let us lose them in the abyss of the tranquillity of the Sacred Heart.

When we are in an abyss of trouble and disquietude, let us plunge ourselves in the peace of this adorable Heart, which no one can take from us. If we find ourselves in an abyss of darkness, He will clothe us anew with His light. If we are plunged in an abyss of sadness, let us go and drown our sorrow in the joy of the Sacred Heart where we will find a treasure that will dissipate our afflictions. If we are in an abyss of fear, let us dive into the abyss of confidence of the Sacred Heart, and there we will make fear yield to love."

Opuscules (ed. Vives, v. III).

Works of St. de Chantal, v. III, p. 39.

Breviary of the Sacred Heart.

Always, always let us communicate when those who direct us authorize us to do so. Let us make ourselves very LITTLE to receive Jesus, and let us say to Him: I trust in Thee! *Thou art my Refuge and my Rampart, my God in Whom I trust.* And our Savior will speak to our hearts *Ps. xc, 2.* these words of consolation: *Because He has placed his confidence in Me, I will deliver him; he will invoke Me, and I will hear him; I will be with him in tribulation to deliver him and to glorify Ps. xc, 14, 15. him.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS THE BREAD OF LIFE

INVITATION

I am the Bread of life. Your fathers did eat manna in the desert, and are dead. This is the bread which cometh down from heaven; that if any man eat of it, he may not die.
(St. John, vi, 48-50).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, give us always of this bread. (Ibid., 34).

All creatures of God tend to life, aspire to life; their work to preserve and develop this life which God has given them by creation is incessant. From the tiniest insect which nourishes itself with the molecules of the air to the gigantic trees of the New World, whose roots multiplied to infinity absorb the sap from the earth to feed the whole tree, all creatures make incessant efforts to attain life...

This life which man pursues with all his energies, because he alone can understand its excellence, the sovereign Author of life alone, has in Himself, the power to give us; and this is why He offers Himself to us as the *Bread of Life*.

Our body, our soul with all its faculties, and above all our heart, reclaim this life, pursue it...

Why then are there so few who know how to find it? Because very small is the number of those who have *ears*, that is to say who open their intelligence to hear and understand this word: *I am the Bread of life!*

What incomprehensible love there is in this divine word! "I have done everything", said Jesus to St. Gertrude, "to manifest in the Holy Eucharist the tenderness of My goodness. If persons refuse to consider how kind I am, at least they might open their eyes, and remark how I am imprisoned in a little ciborium and under what humble appearances I advance towards man. Thus, in the Holy Eucharist, My mercy fully imprisons My justice, and it is My mercy that I wish to manifest to men in this Sacrament."

*The Heart of
St. Gertrude.*

Yes, at the foot of the altar, in presence of the Holy Host, the true believer can exclaim: Truly, the good God knows how to moderate His justice, but His love escapes Him, so great a need has this love to pour itself abroad!... Let us then eat this *Bread of Life*, if we wish to receive these torrents of love and live eternally.

But, what is this Bread? It is the Son of God, the second Person of the Blessed Trinity; It is the Son of Mary, flesh of her flesh, blood of her blood.

After God the Father, it is Mary who has given Jesus to us; so it is by her that we ought to receive this *Bread of life*, we shall then be sure of receiving It properly.

In God, things do not change, they always follow the same order. As God has given us Jesus by

Mary, He wishes that we should go to Jesus by Mary. Salvation came to the world through an *Ave Maria*; the salvation of each individual soul can come only by the *Ave Maria*.

Let us love to invoke the most Blessed Virgin by the angelic salutation before approaching the Divine Banquet. This divine Mother knows what Jesus loves: may she aid us then to prepare our heart to receive the Savior, may she embrace Him when He comes, may she repeat to Him our love and our gratitude.

St. Francis de Sales counsels the recitation of the *Magnificat* after Holy Communion: what thanksgiving like that made by Mary and with Mary!... On the day of the Visitation, "she shed honey and precious balm from her sacred lips; for, how could she exhale anything but that of which she was full? Now, she was full of Jesus." *Letters*, v. XV, p. 76. And we also, in leaving the Eucharistic Table, ought to be full of Jesus, since He gives Himself so intimately to us only that we may live of Him and by Him.

A vessel launched in full sea and tossed about by a violent tempest was in danger of sinking. Everything was thrown into the water, even the food was sacrificed and soon famine made itself felt. A poor mother nursing her little child was on the point of dying with it. Then, regarding it with immense tenderness, she said to it: "O my child, I want you to live! Since I no longer have any milk to feed you, I will give you my blood; I will die, but you will live." In her maternal love, she opened for her son another source of

life, the source of her blood, and the child, sleeping in the arms of its mother, sucks the blood which restores it to life. The captain of the ship, moved by this spectacle, adopted the orphan who, thanks to his protection, became a celebrated man. — A feeble image of what transpired on Calvary and of what continues daily on our altars: Jesus immolates Himself to give us life.

“Love wishes for union. Jesus did not content Himself with the union of friendship, nor even with the union of the mother who made her child drink her blood. He was jealous of the union of bread with man, of the bread eaten every day by all, of the bread which becomes living blood and courses through all the arteries to vivify every member. He said: I am the bread of man. He made Himself our food to communicate His life to us. What a mystery!... And He wishes to give Himself to all, to each soul! What tenderness! What a revelation of the Heart of Jesus!”

R. P. Lemius.

By her Fiat, Mary has sacrificed her son Jesus to make us live. Oh! let us drink in this life which has caused Mary so many sorrows. It was in the midst of the most cruel martyrdom that she adopted us; what would she not do to make us profit by the death of the Savior? If we are fearful, let us go to Mary, she will lead us to Jesus.

Hail, holy Queen, Mother of mercy, our life, our sweetness and our hope. Turn then! O most gracious Advocate, thine eyes of mercy towards us, and, after this exile, show unto us Jesus; O clement, O charitable, O sweet Virgin Mary!

Anthem *Salve
Regina.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS ABANDONED

INVITATION

And you, will you also go away?
(St. John, vi, 68).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life.
(Ibid., verse 69).

Scarcely had our Lord made known the magnificent gift which He would prepare for us in the Holy Eucharist, than several of His disciples left Him at once. Jesus, seeing their defection, turned towards the twelve and asked them with sadness: *And you, will you also go away?*

Since this first contempt of love, how many outrages, how many blasphemies, how many sacrileges have been committed against the most adorable Eucharist! And above all, what ignorance of the love, the goodness, and the mercy of Jesus!

He thirsts to do us good, and we do not wish to go to Him!...

To how many souls does not this complaint which He formerly made to the Jews apply: *You will not come to Me that you may have life...*

Our Lord is not known, we do not profit by Him, we do not utilize His merits.

St. John, v, 40.

The world knew Him not; and again, He came unto His own, and His own received Him not... His dearest ones even often merit this reproach: So long a time have I been with you, and have you not known me?

St. John, xiv, 9.

He is the FAITHFUL FRIEND Who seeks at any price to make His creature happy by bestowing on him His merits; His mercies in this regard are incredible, He uses everything to attain this end.

Nevertheless, He is left alone to tread the wine-press... I have looked about, He says, and there was none to help Me.—I am become a stranger to my brethren, and an alien to the sons of my mother... Opprobrium has broken my Heart... I looked for one that would grieve together with me, but there was none; for one that would console, and I found none!...*

Ps. LXVIII, 9, 21.

In the account of the National Eucharistic Congress of Columbia, which took place in Montevideo in 1913, we read a fact which goes back to the first years of the introduction of the Catholic faith into that country: "A soul, captivated by divine love, one day saw our Lord under the figure of a poor beggar asking for alms. Touched at the sight of this extreme poverty, she questioned Him lovingly to learn the cause of this state. Our Lord answered her: "I AM THE BEGGAR FOR LOVE, BUT ALAS! NO ONE THINKS OF COMING TO MY RELIEF."

Did not this good Master say to St. Teresa: "I have traversed the world, and no one wants My graces; therefore I am going to give them all to you."

My Savior, we desire these graces, and we exclaim with one of Thy lovers: "Love is not known, love is not loved!" The Cure d'Ars affirms, that if we could understand how much God loves us, we would die of happiness.

God loves better to give than to receive. *He is rich in goodness and in fidelity.* Does He not show us His Heart pressed to pour forth His benefits on us when He says: *Hitherto you have not asked!... Ask and you shall receive.* And by His prophets: *Come, buy without money. Open your mouth and I will fill it.*

Exodus, xxxiv, 6.

St. John, xvi, 24.

Isaiah, lv, 1.

Ps. lxxx, 11.

Let us listen to St Francis de Sales: "There is an incomparable correspondence between God and man for their reciprocal perfection; not that God can receive any perfection from man, but because, as man cannot be perfected but by the divine goodness, so the divine goodness can scarcely so well exercise its perfection outside itself as upon our humanity: the one has great want and capacity to receive good, the other great abundance and inclination to bestow it. Nothing is so agreeable to poverty as a liberal abundance, nor to a liberal abundance as a needy poverty; and by how much the good is more abundant, by so much more strong is the inclination to pour forth and communicate itself; by how much more the poor man is in want, so much the more eager is he to receive, as a void is to fill itself. The meeting then of abundance, and indigence is most sweet and agreeable and one could scarcely have said whether the abounding good have a greater contentment, in spreading and communicating itself, or the failing and needy in receiving and in

Acts., xx, 35.

drawing to itself, had not our Savior told us that *it is more blessed to give than to receive*. Now, when there is more blessedness, there is more satisfaction; and therefore the divine goodness receives greater pleasure in giving than we in receiving."

Treatise on the Love of God book I, ch. xv.

Let us enlarge our hearts by confidence to procure Him this "pleasure", and let us approach our Savior *always*, but above all in Holy Communion, that we may receive all that His goodness and love wish to give us.

This will be to console this Divine "*Unrecognized One.*"

What else should we do to attain this end?... "We must live of this life of love, which will unite us to Him... conform ourselves entirely to His state of sacrifice, of abandonment and of love in the most holy Sacrament, where love keeps Him, as a victim wholly abandoned to be continually sacrificed for the glory of His Father and our salvation. Unite yourself to Him in all that you do; refer all to His glory; establish your abode in this amiable Heart of Jesus, and you will find there unalterable peace and the strength to put into effect all the good desires that He gives you... Take to it all your pains and all your bitterness, for all that comes from this Sacred Heart is sweet, and It changes everything into love."

St. Margaret Mary, Letters, v. II, p. 334.

The more we expect from Him, the more we receive; it is given to us according to our faith. Let us constantly repeat to Him: *Lord, to whom shall we go, if not to Thee?... Be my helper, do not abandon me, and do not Thou despise me, God, my Savior.*

Ps. xxvi, 9.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR SAVIOR

INVITATION

I bring you good tidings of great joy: this day is born to you a Savior. (St. Luke, 11,10,11).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Let us go over to Bethlehem, and let us see what the Lord hath shewed to us. (St. Luke, 11, 15).

Bethlehem signifies HOUSE OF BREAD; the holy Tabernacle, the Altar is this true *house of bread* where the Savior nourishes our souls for eternal life. Every day, we can say with truth: *To-day, is born for me a Savior*, to-day, is born for me a Redeemer, today the Savior is born for me; for this mystery is accomplished every day, at every moment, by the application that our Lord makes to us of His divine merits as Savior. Let us then *go up* to Him, to the *House of bread*, let us go to our Savior; He will say to us what He said to St. Jerome one Christmas eve in the grotto of Bethlehem. Let us listen to this touching colloquy:

JESUS. — Jerome, what are you going to give Me for My birth-day?

JEROME. — Divine Infant, I give Thee my heart.

JESUS. — That is very good, but give me something else.

JEROME. — I give The my prayers and all the affections of my heart.

JESUS — That also is good, but give me something else.

JEROME. — I give Thee all that I have, all that I possess.

JESUS. — Very good, but I desire that you give me still something more.

JEROME. — But, divine Infant, I have nothing, what dost Thou desire me to give Thee?

JESUS. — Jerome, give me your sins.

JEROME. — But, what wouldst Thou do with them?

JESUS. — Give me your sins in order that I may pardon them all.

JEROME. — O divine Infant, Thou makest me weep.

Holy Scripture is admirable when it tells us that after God had created man; *He rested*. It was because He found "INDIGENCES" to repair and sins to pardon, as if to do good and to pardon were the repose of God.

"This was the vocation" of our Lord, says St. Francis de Sales, "to be the Savior". — "This merciful Savior came to seek the guilty; He lived only for sinners, because it was for sinners that He was sent." *All flesh shall know that I am the Lord, that save thee, and thy Redeemer.*

"Being sovereignly rich, our Savior has an inclination for the poor to enrich them. Being infinite Perfection, He has an inclination for the infirm to restore them. Being infinite Greatness, He has an inclination for littleness. Being infinite Mercy, He has an inclination for misery to load it

Bossuet.
Isaiah, XLIX, 26.

Sermons, v. X,
p. 368.

with favors. Being *All* in Himself, He has an inclination for nothingness, to create therein. And, blessed are they who are not scandalized in Him!... that is to say, who will believe Him thus, captivated, passionate for misery... and who will trust fully, absolutely in His mercy."

"Although I know myself to be miserable," wrote the holy Bishop of Geneva, "I do not trouble myself about that, and sometimes I am joyous about it, thinking that I am truly a good piece of work for the mercy of God." Saint Margaret Mary was of the same opinion: "Alas! it is the truth that I am only an obstacle to all good, and a composition of all miseries of body and soul. And the support of my weakness, is that our Lord takes His pleasure in glorifying His infinite mercy in the most miserable subjects." "The Father of mercies is necessarily the Father of the miserable," says St. Bernard.

Every time that we give our Savior something to renew, a fault to repair, a weakness to strengthen, we return to Him in some way the title of *Savior*, His title of glory... To say what our Savior is to the soul, ah! this cannot be done...

Let us listen to St. Francis de Sales: "Now, remain in peace before our Lord, who has loved you so long. If hitherto you have not corresponded fully, there is a good remedy, for henceforward you must correspond. Your miseries and infirmities ought not to astonish you: God has seen many others, and His mercy does not reject the miserable, but is exercised in doing them good, making their abjection serve for His glory..."

"Why does he torment himself who has God

Mother M.-M.
Ponnet, *Sub-
jects of Prayer.*

Letters, v. XIII,
p. 366.

Letters, v. II,
p. 279.

1st Sermon for
feast of All
Saints.

Letters, v. XVI,
p. 68.

for the object of his intentions, and who does what he can? What has he to fear? No, No, God is not so terrible to those who love Him; He is satisfied with so little, for He knows very well that we have not much."

Letters, v. XIII.
p. 29.

Let us then go to Jesus Christ, let us go to our Savior, humbly acknowledging our misery, *He will refresh us... make us new.*

Cf. St. Matt.; xi,
28.

Has He not told us by His Prophet: *Be glad and rejoice with all thy heart, O daughter of Jerusalem! The Lord hath taken away thy judgment, He hath turned away thy enemies... Fear not, O Sion: let not thy hands be weakened! The Lord thy God is in the midst of thee a VALIANT SAVIOR: He will rejoice over thee with gladness — when He finds abysses of misery to fill —; He will be silent in His love, instead of pronouncing words of condemnation...*

Sophonias, III,
14-17.

Ah! let us be this humble and little people who confide in the name of the Lord, since the grace of God, our Savior, hath appeared to all men. — When the goodness and kindness of God our Savior appeared, not by the works of justice, which we have done, but according to His mercy, He saved us by the laver of regeneration and renovation of the Holy Ghost, Whom he hath poured forth upon us abundantly through Jesus Christ our Savior, that, being justified by his grace, we may be heirs, according to hope, of life everlasting.

Sophonias, III, 12.

Titus, III, 11.

Titus, III, 4-7.

And we have seen, and do testify that the Father hath sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. — He is my God and my Savior, my Defender, my Protector for ever.

I St. John, IV, 14

Ps. LXI 79.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE WISHED TO REALIZE HIS DIVINE
PROMISES IN YOU

INVITATION

*He who eats My flesh and drinks
My blood abides in Me and I
in Him. As the living Father
hath sent Me and I live by
the Father, so he who eats Me
shall live by Me. (St. John,
vi, 57, 58).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Behold the handmaid of the
Lord, be it done to me accord-
ing to they word (St. Luke,
1, 38).*

It is by the most magnificent promises that our Lord invites us to His sacred banquet! *If any one eat of this bread, He says, he shall not die... he shall live forever... I will raise him up at the last day... He shall abide in Me, and I in him... He who eats Me, shall live by Me.*

St. John, vi, 52,
55, 67, 58.

When we have communicated, we live by Jesus and even of the life of the adorable Trinity. St. Francis de Sales tells us so: "He who receives the most holy Communion, receives Jesus Christ living: this is why His body, His soul and His divinity are in this divine Sacrament; and inasmuch as His divinity is the same as that of the Father and the Holy Spirit, Who, are one only God with Him, he who receives the most

Letters, v. XVII,
p. 221.

Part. III, ch.
xxiv.

Galat., II, 20.

holy Eucharist receives the body of the Son of God and, consequently, His blood and His soul, and consequently, the Most Holy Trinity." The holy Doctor adds in "The Introduction to a Devout Life": "As this sweet Jesus will live within your heart, He will live also in all your conduct, and will appear in your eyes, in your mouth, in your hands, even in your hair; and you can truly say, in imitation of St. Paul: *I live, now not I, but Jesus Christ lives in me.*"

O mystery of love! we, poor creatures, disappear in our God, in our Savior!!!...

The Protestant father of a family, on whom vain efforts had been tried to lead him back to the centre of truth, fell ill; death was soon imminent, but, alas! he persisted in error... In her distress, his daughter made an heroic act of confidence: she abandoned her father to the divine mercy. Suddenly, a luminous thought passed through her mind: the next day, she went to Holy Communion, and scarcely had she returned from the holy Table, than she left the church, hurried home to the sick man, said a few words to him, and then left him. A moment later, her father called her: "Go get a priest for me", he said, "I want to be a Catholic." — The presence of the Eucharistic Jesus had made itself felt to the dying man: Jesus had spoken by the mouth of the young girl... Jesus had touched him... Jesus had converted him...

"This divine Sacrament, wrote St. Francis de Sales, is principally instituted that we may receive the body, the blood of our Savior with His vivifying life: just as clothes cover principally

the body of man, but because the soul is united to the body, they consequently cover the soul, the understanding, the memory and the will."

*Letters, v.XVII,
p. 221.*

Every day, before ascending the holy altar, Blessed Perboyre addressed our Lord, saying to Him with very great fervor: "Behold, O my divine Savior, notwithstanding my unworthiness, I am going to give Thee a being which Thou dost not possess: the sacramental being. I beseech Thee then! to operate in me the same marvel that I am going to work on this bread in virtue of the power which Thou hast confided to me. When I say: *This is my body*, say also of Thy unworthy servant: This is My body. Grant, that by Thy almighty Power and Thy infinite mercy, I may be changed and wholly transformed into Thee. That my hands may be the hands of Jesus, my eyes the eyes of Jesus, my tongue the tongue of Jesus, that all my senses and my whole body may serve only to glorify Thee. But above all, transform my soul and all its powers: that my memory, my intellect, my heart may be the memory, the intellect and the Heart of Jesus; that my actions, my sentiments may be like to Thy operations, Thy sentiments, and that, as Thy Father said of Thee: *This day have I begotten Thee*, Thou mayest be able to say it also of me, and add with Thy heavenly Father: *This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased*. Yes, destroy in me all that is not of Thee; grant that I may no longer live but by Thee, in Thee and for Thee, so that I also on my side can say like the great Apostle: "It is no longer I who live, it is Jesus Christ Who lives in me."

Ps. 11, 7.

St. Matt., III, 17.

Galat., 11, 20.

*Life of Blessed
Perboyre.*

Let us communicate, and Jesus will live in us; this is the surest way of becoming one with Him, it is the best way to glorify Him. Thus, St. Francis de Sales taught "that the principal intention that we should have in Holy Communion should be the glory of our Lord and our union with Him." By this Eucharistic union we will receive the effect of His divine promises: promises of resurrection, of immortality, of life eternal... The word of the Son of God is pledged, and will we still fear?...

Oh! since the original fall, fear had seized the heart of man: he feared God. Then, our Savior, to give him confidence, came to him, and opened to him the abysses of His mercy.

In descending into our heart by Holy Communion, He comes to bring assistance into this place besieged by fear: *See My hands and My side*, He says to us. "Do you need fortitude, here are My hands; do you need strength of heart, here is mine; are you timid *doves*, here are *clefts*; are you sick, here is medicine: *And death has been absorbed by victory*; are you a captive, here is the ransom. Oh! how could we fear?

If a mother should forget the child of her womb, yet, will I never forget thee; for I carry thee graven on my hands, continues our Savior. "He takes our miseries and ennobles them; He presses our miseries to His HEART: *He shows His side*. But, let us give Him love for love..." and believe what He has promised.

My truth and my goodness shall be with him, says our Lord, *and in my name shall his horn be exalted. My mercy I will not take away from him, nor will I suffer my truth to fail.*

Spiritual Directory.

St. Luke, xxiv, 39.

Cant., ii, 14.

I Cor., xv, 54.

Isaiah, xlix, 15, 16.

St. F. de Sales,
Sermons, v.
VII, pp. 69, 170.

St. John, xx, 20.

Ps. LXXXVIII,
25, 34.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR CONSOLER

INVITATION

Come to me, all you who are weary and heavily laden, and I will refresh you. (St. Matt., xi, 28).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

The Spirit of the Lord has been sent to you to heal the contrite of heart. (St. Luke, iv, 18).

Jesus Christ is the supreme Consoler of our souls. *He was made flesh in order, so to speak, to enter into our weaknesses, to embrace our miseries and our infirmities. He took all our languors, He has carried all our sorrows.* — It behoved Him in all things to be made like unto His brethren, says Saint Paul, that he might become a merciful and faithful high-priest before God, that He might be a propitiation for the sins of the people; For in that wherein He Himself hath suffered, and been tempted, He is able to succor them also that are tempted. — And elsewhere, the same Apostle writes: *It hath well pleased the Father, that in Him all fulness should dwell, that He may hold the primacy.*

St. John, 1, 14.

Isaiah, LIII, 4.

Hebr., II, 17, 18.

Col., I, 19.

All plentitude dwells in Him, that of suffering has also been His. This is why, addressing Himself to every suffering soul He says: *Come to Me...*

you who suffer . . . that I may console you . . . Come . . . and I will refresh you, re-make you. It belongs only to Him Who has received all things in His hands, to refresh them, to make them new.

P.H. Perroy, S.J. Near the Heart of Jesus, suffering is lighted up with divine brilliancy, and we understand that it is *the mystery of the Kingdom, the thing of God, the thing of the Father*. It is also the sign of the presence of God in the soul; in suffering, the divine action is direct. Each sorrow is a kiss of the Crucifix.

Tauler. “We eat God when we communicate, and God eats us when we suffer; that is, He transforms us into Himself. — If suffering did not procure immense advantages for us, He would not permit even a breath of air to disturb His elect . . .”

Life of St. Angela. Jesus has always suffered; He gives the same portion to those that He loves most. “Those whom I love most,” he said to St. Angela de Foligno, “eat nearest to Me at My table, they partake of the same bread of tribulation and they drink at the same cup of the chalice of my Passion.”

Ps. xxxiii, 20, 21. *Many are the afflictions of the just, but out of all of them will the Lord deliver them. The Lord keepeth all their bones; not one of them shall be broken.*

What augments suffering, is to suffer alone; but, are we ever alone? . . . Is not THE SAVIOR FRIEND always near to understand us, to suffer with us, to console, to strengthen us? . . . *He has borne all our sorrows, He knows them, He counts them . . . Therefore let us go to Him.* Father Ventura says that in the Garden of Olives Jesus experienc-

ed all the sorrows of men, that He shuddered at them and exclaimed: *Let this chalice pass from Me!*... For Himself, He thirsted for suffering, but He feared the chalice for His elect. At the same time seeing all the advantages that suffering would procure for them, He pronounced His Fiat: *Father, let it be done according to Thy will.*

Conferences on
the Passion,
v. 1, 8th Con-
ference.

St. Matt., xxvi,
39, 42.

It is always for our greatest good that our Lord sends us suffering, and He never sends it to us without giving us at the same time the strength to bear it and to draw profit from it... *My grace is sufficient for Thee*, He says to us as to St. Paul; then, at the height of the sorrow, we also *triumph* Rom., viii, 37. by Him Who has loved us.

The divine Master said to St. Gertrude: "Remember that a faithful friend compassionates the sorrows of his friend and compensates for them as well as he can by his caresses. What will not I then do in heaven to compensate by the tenderness of my affection for thy pains of to-day!"

The Heart of
St. Gertrude.

"If jealousy could reign in the kingdom of eternal love, the Angels would envy the sufferings of God for man and the sufferings of man for God." And we, if we could understand the marvels that suffering works in souls, we would wish to suffer always.

St. Francis de
Sales, Letters,
v.XIX, p. 391.

"Temptations and sufferings are as necessary to man as grace. Virtue takes birth, is perfected, in temptation and becomes fruitful. It is necessary that we should be tempted in order that virtue may become a habit in us... Just as meat becomes corrupt if it is not salted, so we cannot please God without temptations and sufferings. God can

give Himself to us as well by the heaviest temptations as by the sweetness of the virtues, or even by the Sacraments. No trial ever comes to us that has not been foreseen from all eternity by the Heart of Jesus; and God gives Himself as truly to us in suffering as in the Holy Eucharist. Why do we not obtain as many graces in suffering as in Holy Communion? Because we take them as sufferings, and not as a precious gift from our best Friend... When God gives us the signal favor of bearing within us, for love of Him, the vesture of suffering, it is a certain sign that He loves

Tauler, *Sermons*. us..."

Tauler gave this advice to one of his disciples, "You will reach the end of all your trials by a fervent prayer of the spirit."

When we have understood the Heart of our Lord, we can say that there is no more suffering; we know that everything comes from Him, we love all that He does, we trust Him, we repose on Him, in His love, we abandon ourselves to Him. He who suffers in this way will not be long in experiencing the beneficent effects of suffering, according to this word of the Holy Spirit: *Because his soul has labored, he shall see and be filled.*

Are we in pain? let us go to Jesus, let us confide to Him our solicitude, our sorrows... He will strengthen us, He will console us, and we can say: *When I called upon Thee, O my God, when I was in distress Thou hast enlarged me. — God hath made me to grow in the land of affliction.*

Isaiah, LIII, 11.

Ps. iv, 1.

Gen., xli, 62.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR PHYSICIAN

INVITATION

They that are in health need not a physician, but they that are ill. (St. Matt., ix, 12).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, he whom thou lovest is sick. (St. John, xi, 3).

We have not a High-priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities, exclaims the great Apostle, *for, to resemble us, He was tempted in all things without sin.* Thus, one of the titles that our Lord Jesus Christ has wished to give Himself, and by which all His mercy and charity are revealed to us, is that of Physician. Hebr., iv, 5.

All those who had sick brought them to Him, and He cured them all. And to show us what immense compassion our miseries excite in His Heart, He extends His hands towards those who have recourse to Him, touching the eyes of the blind, or the ears of the deaf, or the tongue of the mute, as if to communicate to them something of the fulness that was in Him. — Our Jesus of the Eucharist is the same as He Who cured, He has not changed... His preferences are still the same: the infirm, sinners, the sick of soul above all, the weak: these have His regard of predilection.

St. Matt., iv, 24.

There are some who say: I am too miserable, I am not worthy of communicating often. — This is as if they said: I am sick, therefore I will not go to the physician; I am weak, therefore I will not eat... No matter how great our misery, let us draw near to our divine Physician.

“The Sacred Heart of Jesus is an abyss of love”, says St. Margaret Mary, “It is the throne of mercy, where the most miserable are the best received, provided that love presents them in the abyss of their misery. — If we are in an abyss of privations and desolations, let us enter into this divine Heart, It is the abyss of all consolation. — If we are in an abyss of resistance and opposition to the will of God, we must plunge ourselves into that of submission and conformity to the Sacred Heart of our Lord. — If we are in an abyss of dryness and powerlessness, let us go and plunge ourselves into the amiable Heart of Jesus. — If we are in an abyss of poverty and stripped of all, let us go and bury ourselves in the Sacred Heart, It will enrich us.”

Our Lord loves to show Himself good. All the kindnesses that we suppose to be in God are not those that really are there. So, in all our maladies of soul, of heart and of body, let us say YES to the divine Goodness, and let it act.

To say YES to the divine Goodness, is to confide in it, to have faith in it. When Jesus was on earth, what did He ask for a cure? Faith, always faith: *Do you believe that I can do this unto you...? If thou canst believe, all things are possible to him that believeth... Go, it will be done unto thee ac-*

*Breviary of the
Sacred Heart.*

St. Matt., ix, 28.

St. Mark, ix, 22.

St. Matt., viii, 13.

cording to thy faith. "If you believe", said our Lord to St. Margaret Mary, "you will see the power of My Heart in the magnificence of My love."

"All the good that I have received", affirms St. Gertrude, "I owe to the confidence that I have had in the gratuitous goodness of my God." Our Lord Himself gave this testimony of her, reproaching a holy soul for the hesitations of her prayers: "Oh! why do you not resemble my well beloved Gertrude! there is nothing that she does not hope from My bounty, so there is nothing that My

*Letters, v. II,
p. 426 note.*

*The Heart of
St. Gertrude.*

"Let us proclaim only our wounds and miseries at the gate of the temple of divine compassion. But let us remember "to proclaim them with joy" ... so that our Lord may "fill us with His Kingdom" and with this healing *virtue* which goes out from Him.

*St. Francis de
Sales, Letters,
v. XIII, p. 392.*

A physician never judges the state of his invalid better than when he sees him in a crisis of his malady; he can then cure him more surely. The more ill we are, the more we are the prey of the fever of our passions, the more we should have recourse to the heavenly Physician of the Eucharist.

"The daughter of an excellent physician, fell ill, and being in a continual fever and knowing that her father loved her most tenderly, said to one of her friends: "I feel very great pain, but I do not think of remedies, for I do not know what might serve for my cure. I might desire one thing and another be necessary for me: Do I not gain more by leaving this care to my father, who

knows, who can, who wills for me all that is required for my health? I should do wrong by willing anything for he wills all that will be profitable for me. I will only wait to let him do what is expedient, and when he comes to me I will only look at him, testify my love for him and show my perfect confidence." — And on these words she fell asleep. Meanwhile her father, judging fit to bleed her, disposed all that was necessary, and waking her up, asked her "if she were willing to suffer the operation." — "My father, she said, I am yours, I know not what to will for my cure, it is yours to will and do for me what seems good to you; it is enough, for me, to love and honor you with all my heart as I do..." — So her arm is tied and her father himself opens the vein; and while the blood flows, this loving daughter looks not at her arm, nor at the spurting blood, but keeping her eyes fixed on her father's face, she says only from time to time: "My father loves me, and I, I am entirely his. "Oh! what true love this daughter testified towards her father!"

*Treatise on the
Love of God,
Book IX, ch. 15.*

Our Savior "wounds hearts by His word, in order to lead them to Him and to cure them; like the hunter, who having wounded the stags of Crete, offered them a dittany (the "dittany of Crete") which cured them. He wounds by contrition, He cures by absolution; He opens the wound of sorrow, He heals it with the balm of love."

St. Francis de
Sales, Ser.
mons, v. VIII,
p. 56.

When we have communicated, let us say to Jesus: *Lord, he whom Thou lovest is sick.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR REMEDY

INVITATION

This is My body which will be broken for you... By His wounds you will be healed.
(I Cor., xi, 24, according to the Greek; Isaiah, LIII, 5).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

If I can but touch the hem of His garment, I shall be cured.
(St. Matt., ix, 21).

It is by His wounds that you have been cured, I Ep., ii, 24.
wrote the Apostle St. Peter to the first Christians.
In effect, Jesus Christ, did not only present Himself to His Father to be the Physician of our souls, but He wished to be Himself the remedy for all our evils. When He was on earth, a virtue went out from Him which cured all, says the Evangelist.

St. Luke, vi, 19.

Our Lord is always the same, His virtue is always operative, and if we had faith, we would see the same prodigies as at the time of His mortal life. We could always sing:

In the mire of filth and sin,
Dragging on to the abyss,
Fallen man no hope could win
Lifting him to heaven's bliss:

Lo! from out the clouds a cry
 Answered to his soul's despair,
 Who will save thee? Ah! 'tis I,
 Said the angel pure and fair.

No, said God, that is My part,
 And the Son, forsaking all,
 Took our sin and gave His Heart;
 Then the angel heard His call,
 Ravished by the great exchange,
 See, He said, nor think it strange
 That I raise him from the sod,
 Two are happy: Man and God.

Blessed is He Who saves; blessed is he who is saved!...

In our weakness and infirmity, let us repeat with St. Paul: *Gladly will I glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. For which cause I will please myself in my infirmities... for when I am weak, then I am powerful.* "If our Lord sometimes permits cruel revolts in man, it is not always for the punishment of sin," says St. Francis de Sales on this text of the Apostle, "but to manifest the strength and virtue of the divine assistance and grace. And note that we are not only not to be disquieted in our temptations and infirmities, but we are even to glory in our infirmity, that thereby God's virtue may appear in us, sustaining our weakness against the force of the suggestion and temptation."

"It is not enough to be little before God" said St. Jane de Chantal, "we must be *nothing*; this

is the foundation on which He builds, for He is pleased to build on nothingness. And His works are as much greater as our annihilation is more perfect... When we are deprived of everything else, then are we least abandoned by God. He is never more pressingly invited to aid us than when He sees us deprived of every other assistance."

Works, v. 11.
p. 267.

When our Lord sees us despoiled, wounded, His Heart is moved: *Thy bruise is incurable, thy wound is very grievous*, He seems to say to the soul thus stripped, *there is none to bind up thy wound... none to care for thee!* *Why criest thou for thy affliction? thy sorrow is incurable...* Come to Me, and I will heal thy wounds, I will cure them, because they have called thee "an outcast", the Sion for whom no one cares.

Jeremiah, xxx,
12, 14, 15, 17.

When our Lord traversed Galilee, the multitudes followed Him, says the Evangelist: *And all the multitude sought to touch Him for virtue went out from Him and healed all.* — *They presented to Him all sick people that were taken with divers diseases, and torments... and He cured them.*

St. Luke, vi, 19.

St. Matt., iv, 24.

In the Tabernacle, our Lord is as powerful as on the way to Galilee; why do we not go to Him to ask for the remedy for our ills?... *He healeth the broken of heart, and bindeth up their bruises. Great is our Lord, and great is His power and of His wisdom there is no number.* — *Who covereth the heaven with clouds and prepareth rain for the earth.* — *Who maketh grass to grow on the mountains and herbs for the service of man.* — *Who giveth to beasts their food and to the young ravens that call upon Him.* — *He shall not delight*

in the strength of the horse nor take pleasure in the legs of man; The Lord taketh pleasure in them that fear Him, and in them that hope in His

Ps. CXLVI, 8, 5, mercy.

8-11.

Jesus thirsts to cure us, all He asks of us is confidence, faith in Him: *He who believes in Me, even though he should be dead, will live...* *Believest thou this?* as if He said: *Do you believe not only in My power, but also in My love, in My HEART?...* — “Do you believe that I can do it?” says the Savior to each suppliant soul. — And after having heard us, He repeats to us as to St. Margaret Mary: “Did I not tell you that if you could believe, you would see your desires

Letters, v. II, accomplished?”

p. 426.

“Make then your abode in the adorable Heart of Jesus”, adds the Saint; there bear your little vexations and trials, and you will be appeased: you will there find the remedy for your ills, strength in your weakness and a refuge in all your necessities.”

Our sharpest pains, our temptations confided to the Divine Heart are transformed into benefits for our soul: *You thought evil against me, we can say to each grief, but God turned it into good.*

The Venerable Father de la Colombiere was pleased to glorify the Divine Goodness by a true confidence: “My God,” he said, “I am so persuaded that Thou watchest over those who hope in Thee, I am so persuaded that we can want for nothing when we expect all things from Thee, that I am resolved to live in future without any care, and to cast on Thee all my disquietudes. I

Letters, v. II,

p. 704.

Gen., 1, 20.

may lose Thy grace by sin, but I shall never lose my hope; I shall preserve it to the last moment of my life, and all the demons may attempt in vain at that moment to snatch it from me... Let others rest on the innocence of their lives, or the rigor of their penances, or the number of their alms, or the fervor of their prayers; for me, Lord, all my confidence, is my confidence itself, this confidence has never deceived any one... I am sure of hoping always, because I hope for this invariable trust from Thy liberality... and to carry my trust as far as it can go, I hope for Thee Thyself from Thyself, O my Creator."

Retreat.

Let us listen to our Lord speaking to us by the author of "The Imitation": "My child, I am *the Lord Who strengthens Thee in the day of tribulation*. Come to Me, when you are in pain. I am the Deliverer of those who trust in Me; out of Me, there is no lasting remedy. Revive yourself in the light of My mercy: for I am near you, says the Lord, to renew all things, not only in their integrity, but also in a measure full to overflowing. *Is there anything that can be difficult for Me?* Wait for Me, wait: I will come and cure you."

Nahum, 1, 7.

Let not your heart be troubled, neither do you fear. The Lord lifteth up all who fall, and setteth up all who are cast down.

Jer., xxxii, 27.

Book III, ch. xxx

*St. John, xiv, 1.
27.*

Ps. cxlvii, 14.

Let us then draw near to our sovereign Physician, to our Divine Remedy: "If any one is cast down, He gives joy; if any one is tempted, He helps; if any one is wounded, He cures." — *Let us touch the hem of His garment*, that is to say, let us receive this humble host which hides

St. Francis de Sales, Sermons, v. VII, p. 118.

His Humanity and His Divinity. Let us communicate, and we shall be healed, we shall find comfort and peace.

It was neither herb, nor mollifying plaster that healed us, but Thy word, O Lord, which healeth all things, but Thy sacred Body and Thy precious Blood! — Jesus, all covered with the merits of His Passion, calls us, He, “the unique and sweet Remedy of all our evils... In regarding Him at-

Wis., xvi, 12.

St. Francis de Sales, *Conferences*, XII, p. 221.

“we find the ointment for our wounds.” A single drop of His blood, a single one of His tears, “it is marvelous how admirable this liquor is for all kinds of heart-aches!...” What will it be when we receive the whole Savior?... *Lord, Thou art He Who cures all our evils.*

St. F. de Sales, *Letters*, v. XIII, p. 134.

Who has touched Me? asked our Lord when the woman troubled with the issue of blood came up

St. Luke, VIII, 46.

behind Him, to touch the hem of His garment. “O! Lord”, says a Saint, “it is not the exterior touch of this creature that has touched Thee; it is her faith, her confidence.” Let us have this lively faith! we shall then touch the Heart of Jesus, and this Heart will cure us.

Collect for the
xxiv Sunday
after Pentecost.

“Animate our wills, we beseech Thee, O Lord, that, producing with more affection the works of divine grace, we may receive with more abundance the remedies which Thy mercy gives us.” Amen.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS THE SON OF GOD

INVITATION

*This is my beloved Son in
Whom I am well pleased:
Hear him.* (St. Matt., XVII, 5).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Yes, Lord, I believe that Thou
art the Son of the living God
Who art come into this world.
St. John, XI, 27).*

For the grace of God hath appeared to all men in Christ Jesus our Savior, wrote St. Paul to one of his disciples. Yes, this great God, this God of all sanctity has made Himself accessible to His creature. After having formed him to His image, it was not enough for His love to speak to him by the admirable works accomplished in his favor. Between the Heart of God and ours, there must be a more intimate union: therefore He gave us His Son, the *object* of His eternal *complacency*. Let us listen to Him. — What will He say to us? He will reveal the Father to us, His goodness, His benignity, His charity; for, following the expression of St. Francis de Sales, God is “THE SOVEREIGN GOOD”. — He is the GOOD GOOD, as a little child in all the purity of its innocence lisped to Him.

Ah! truly, we can sing with holy Church:

*Letters, v. XIII,
p. 340.*

Happy fault of our first parents, since it has merited for us the divine Emmanuel, God with us!

Our Savior is the manifestation of Divine Charity. All the attributes of God are at the service of this Charity... Life, in God, is Goodness. All the goodness that we suppose to be in God is nothing in comparison with the reality. *God alone is good*, said our Lord. And the Psalmist exclaims: *God hath spoken once, these two things have I heard: That power belongeth to God, AND MERCY TO THEE, O LORD.*

St. Luke, xviii,
19.

Ps. lxi, 12, 18.

Life of the Saint.

Exodus, xxxiv,
18, 19.

The union contracted by the Son of God with human nature continually attracts Him towards it and solicits Him incessantly to pour out over it His benefits.

"I shall gratify thee far beyond all that thou canst believe or estimate", said He to St. Mechtilde. "I tell thee in truth: it is a great pleasure for Me that men expect great things from Me... It is useful to man to hope for much from Me and to trust himself to Me."

The glory of God, is to communicate Himself to His creature, to pour into the soul the torrents of His divine life. "Do good continually", says St. John Chrysostom, "it is in this that God makes His glory consist." — Moses said to our Lord one day: *Show me Thy glory.* And our Lord answered: *I will show you all My goodness.*

Rev. Father Tissot exalted this goodness which glorifies itself in inclining towards men: He says: "God, — Job is astonished at it — is pleased in magnifying man! He seems constantly occupied

in elevating him, forming him to His image, redeeming him with His blood, deifying him by His grace, associating him to Himself in His glory. Man on the contrary, glorifies God in abasing himself before Him. It is because God cannot increase in ascending. He is the Most High, but He can increase by descending, in the knowledge and love of His reasonable creatures, filling the abysses formed in them by humility. In proportion as a soul humbles herself, so does she make a larger place for truth, and God is truth."

Discourses, vol. II.

What is humility, but a profound mistrust of self and a great confidence in God? St. Francis de Sales addressing his dear daughters tells them: "You ask me if a soul having the sentiment of its misery can go to God with great confidence? I answer that not only the soul that has the knowledge of its misery can have great confidence in God, but she cannot have a great confidence except when she has the knowledge of her misery, for this knowledge and confession of our misery introduce us before God... Between mercy and misery, there is a certain bond so strong, that one cannot be exercised without the other... inasmuch as mercy is exercised towards the miserable only... — The more we know ourselves to be miserable, the more occasion have we to trust in God, since we have no reason to confide in ourselves. Mistrust of self proceeds from the knowledge of our imperfections. It is very good to mistrust ourselves, but of what use would it be, if it did not cause us to cast all our confidence in God and expect all from His mercy? The faults and imperfections

that we commit daily ought certainly to bring us shame and confusion when we wish to approach our Lord... but we must not remain there, for these virtues of humility, of abjection and of confusion are the medium virtues by which we ought to mount to the union of our soul with its God. It would not be a great thing to annihilate and despoil one's self (which is done by acts of confusion), if it were not to give one's self entirely to God, as St. Paul teaches us when he says: *Put off the old man, and clothe yourself with the new;* for we must not remain naked, but we must clothe ourselves with God. This little withdrawal is made only to enable us to cast ourselves into God by an act of love and confidence, for we must not abase ourselves with sadness and disquietude: it is self-love that causes this confusion..."

Let us then be of these truly humble souls who expect nothing from themselves, but who expect all from their Savior. Let us allow the Son of God to glorify His Father in stooping even to us. Where does He abase Himself more than in the Holy Eucharist?... When we receive Him in this Sacrament of love, we truly glorify Jesus, the Son of God, and He Himself glorifies His father in us.

Praise, glory, wisdom, thanksgiving, honor, power and strength be to our God, for ever and ever! — To Him Who hath loved us, and washed us from our sins in His own blood, ... to Him be glory and empire for ever and ever!

But, I have put my trust in Thee, O Lord; I said: Thou art my God! my lot is in Thy hands. — In Thee, O Lord, have I hoped; let me never be confounded.

Coloss., III, 9,10.

*Conferences, II,
v.VI, pp.19-21.*

Apoc. VII, 12, I, 6.

Ps. XXX, 15,16, I.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR REPOSE

INVITATION

*Come apart, into a desert place,
and rest a little. (St. Mark,
vi, 31).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Lord, it is good for us to be
here. (St. Matt., xvii, 4).*

The first condition that our Lord imposes on a soul for discovering Himself to her and for communicating to her the secrets of His love, is recollection, interior solitude. *I will lead my beloved into solitude, and I will speak to her heart.*

Osee, 11, 14.

St. Mary Magdalen enjoyed this delicious repose near Jesus; she had remitted to Him the entire care of herself, she had despoiled herself of every desire that she might belong entirely to her good Master. Oh! how happy we should be if we left the whole care of ourselves to our Lord! His charity would take care of us. "When we abandon all," says St. Francis de Sales, "God takes care of all" . . . "The measure of the Providence of God over us is that of our confidence in Him . . . No one confides in God who does not reap the fruit of His confidence; and we must never doubt and feel that God will fail us, for His love is infinite for the soul who reposes in Him."

*Conferences, v.
VI, pp. 28, 87,
105.*

Recollection, peace, this is the state in which

the soul should be established to receive the communications of divine Charity. The soul who is truly desirous of uniting herself to God ought to do everything to procure peace without which there can be no divine union. The peace derived from nature has no duration; created things, in agitating it, destroy it. We have peace because we know that God sees everything, that He can do everything, that He will do only what He wills, at least that nothing will happen that He does not permit.

During His mortal life, Jesus considered His Father, He accomplished His will; other things He disregarded. We ought to do the same: draw our life, as from a living source, in the accomplishment of the will of God, out of this there is no life. *Life is in His will.* Therefore we must calm ourselves, and remain in peace and repose concerning that which God does and disposes, repeating with St. Francis de Sales: "I know that God does all, and I love all that God does" . . . "I would prefer to be a gnat in the will of God to a seraph in my own."

Ps. xxix, 6.

Let us love to say to Jesus, above all when we possess Him by Holy Communion: "Lord, I experience only happiness at all that Thou dost, I could have no pleasure in any other thing, I feel that I love only what Thou dost. Lord, I leave to Thee the care of my affairs; my "trade" — the charming word of a workman — is to love Thee. My *God*, my *Repose*, my *Assurance* and my *Life*! I establish myself in Thee, and there I remain for this day which is beginning, for those which will follow and for all eternity.

Our Lord wishes to take from us all that can pain us. Our whole past is the affair of His Mercy; our future, that of His Providence; our present, that of His love. Let us be entirely given up to the work of this Love. — To love, is to trust, to abandon one's self, to discharge one's self into the Heart of the *Friend*, of all that oppresses or preoccupies us; it is to count on the *Friend* for everything, it is to forget one's self continually and to suffer willingly for His good pleasure. — Why, does the soul recollected in her God, become disquieted? She no longer has any personal affairs, there remains for her only the blessing of depending on God for all. Our Savior desires that we should thus count on Him; our fear offends His Love. If we should do everything in the world, and if we did not repose on our Lord for all, we would not satisfy Him according to the desire of His Heart; but if we repose on Him for everything, we satisfy Him. His love is satisfied in seeing us repose on Him.

“Above all and in all, rest, O my soul, forever *Imitation*, Book III, ch. xxii. in the Lord, for He Himself is the eternal rest of the Saints.”

Repose in our Lord ought to be the habitual state of the soul; it is in this holy repose that she fortifies herself and keeps herself in expectation of the divine Will to accomplish it. *My eyes are always on the Lord, for He will disengage my feet from the nets and the snares.* “Have you fallen into the nets of adversity? Regard not your misfortune, nor the snares in which you have been taken: look at God and let Him act, He will take care of you. *Cast thy care on Him, and He will sustain*

Ps. LIV, 28.

thee. Why do you trouble yourself with willing or not willing the events and accidents of this life, since you are ignorant of what is best for you to will, and since God will always will for you, without your troubling yourself, all you could will for yourself? Await therefore in peace of mind the effects of the divine pleasure, and let this will suffice you, since it is always the best; for so He gave order to His well-beloved St. Catherine of Sienna: "Think of Me, said he to her, and I will think of you." Oh! God, what souls, who amidst all kinds of accidents always keep their attention and affection on the eternal Goodness, to honor and love it forever!"

St. Francis de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Book IX, ch. xv.

Ps. IV, 9.

Ps. CXXXII, 14.

Imitation, Book III, ch. xv.

Isaiah. XXXIII, 18.

Ps. CXIV, 7.

Let us often say this prayer of the Imitation: "O most sweet Jesus, grant that I may rest in Thee above all things desired, and that my heart may be at peace in Thee: Thou art the true peace of the heart; Thou art its only rest; out of Thee, all things are hard and uneasy. *In this peace, in the self-same*, that is in Thee, the one sovereign eternal Good, *I will sleep and I will rest*. Yes, it is the place of my repose forever."

But, it is in the divine Heart that we ought, by preference, to love to repose. With what ineffable tenderness did not Jesus open It to *His people* of predilection, to His apostles, to His devoted friends, to His intimate associates, to the suffering, above all to the **VERY LITTLE**, to establish them *in the beauty of peace, in the tabernacles of confidence and in an opulent repose!*

O my soul, if you are or wish to be of this number, *return to your repose, for the Lord will fill you with good things.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR WAY

INVITATION

*Follow Me... I am the Way...
No man cometh to the Father
but by Me. (St. John, I, 43,
xvi, 6).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Master, we know that Thou
teachest the way of God in
truth.. Behold we have left
all things and followed Thee
St. Matt., xxii, 16, xix, 27).*

I am the Way... “Behold a word of the good Master! How perfectly it reveals Him! Contrary to man, to whom it is natural to rise to high places”, says Bossuet in a magnificent panegyric of St. Francis de Sales, “to display from afar, with pomp, the brilliancy of a superb grandeur, when Jesus wishes to portray Himself, He compares Himself to that which is most accessible; He calls Himself by the most common of names, the most in use in our ordinary language, one of those most frequently repeated in Holy Scripture: it is thus that He compares Himself to a way. *I am the Way.* Let us penetrate this divine word.

“A way is an issue; the waters of a lake have a way in the channel or river through which they flow. A way is a means of communication, it is a route which binds together separated localities

and makes reciprocal intercourse between their inhabitants possible. With these simple premises let us endeavor to comment on this text of the good Master: *I am the Way*. We shall see that this adorable Savior is both the outlet for divine charity, and the communication between us and God.—O Jesus, we adore Thee under the name which Thou hast taken and in the state which it designates; Jesus, *Way!* we recognize Thee as the bond of union, the mediator between heaven and earth, as the route which all the predestined should follow.” The prophet says: *And a path, and a way shall be there; and it shall be called the holy way, this shall be unto you a straight way, so that even fools shall not err therein.*

P. Tissot, *Discourses*, v. I.

Isaiah, xxxv, 8.

St. John, xv, 5.

Our Savior is the channel by which God comes to us and by which we go to God. Without the Savior we are dead, with Him, we live: *Without Me, you can do nothing*, says this good Master. Therefore holy Church terminates all her prayers by these words: *Per Christum Dominum nostrum*. Many persons pronounce these words, but few reduce them to practice. Our Lord wishes that we should live by Him, not only in Holy Communion, at Holy Mass, in prayer, but in all our actions even the most ordinary, the most insignificant. *I am the Vine, and you are the branches; he that abideth in Me and I in him beareth much fruit. If any one abide not in Me, he shall be cast off as a useless branch.*

Jesus wishes to be the way of Charity for every one. He instituted the Holy Eucharist in order to be able to communicate to each soul the effusions of an infinite love, to give Himself to her, whole

St. John, xv, 5,6.

and entire, and to be able to glorify His Father by her. — He wishes to be the *way* for each soul. The Word becomes incarnate under the veils of the host, and the *way* communicates itself thus personally, substantially to all the communicants.

Throughout His mortal life, Jesus made Himself the *way* in a different manner. He passed through all the states of human life, leaving in each, merits to exploit and examples to imitate. He sanctified all positions, all situations, so that in walking in the foot-prints which He has left, we might be able to go to the Father. *No man hath ascended into heaven, but he that descended from heaven.* St. John, III, 12. Is not the good Master right in saying to us: *I am the Way, no man cometh to the Father but by Me?* St. Paul adds: *He that spared not even His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how hath he not also with him given us all things?* Rom., VIII, 32.

“In whatever condition we may find ourselves, let us think that the path has been trodden and that Jesus, our *Way*, has passed there the first. — I remember that in making the excursion to Mont-Blanc, I watched my guide, who, passing before me, was very careful to prepare a path for me. I said to him: “John, you are doing what our Lord did, you are preparing the *way*, and I have only to follow you.” And the good man answered me, with that religious sense that is still found among our mountaineers: “Oh! yes, but with this difference that my steps disappear, while our Lord’s are never effaced.” — These words reminded me of the king Saint Wenceslaus. He was passing through roads full of snow, walking was difficult and “the equerry of the king” could scarcely fol-

low his master. The latter turning, and seeing that his servant could not walk at the same pace as he, said to him: "Put your steps into mine, and you will have nothing to fear." The equerry obeyed, and had no difficulty in following his master. And we, fitting our steps into those of the Savior, will have nothing to fear.

"We must all enter into this *way*, that is, believe in the divine Charity loving to dispense itself. Let us believe in the infinite love of the Good God, let us believe in our Savior, let us acknowledge our nothingness, but let us draw constantly from the merits of our Redeemer. Doing this, we shall advance... following our Savior step by step.

Works, v. II,
p. 152.

"It seems to me that I hear St. Jane de Chantal repeat to us: "We must follow our Savior, step by step, by the faithful practice of the virtues to which our vocation obliges us. And, believe me, if we are faithful to walk vigorously, at all times, after the Savior, and by all the ways that He wishes, without any other care than that of advancing, He will soon fortify us by His grace and make us run."

P. Tissot, Discourses, v. I.

Ps. LXVI, 2, 3.

*Ps. cxviii, 1, 30,
32, 37.*

May God have mercy on us... may He cause the light of His countenance to shine upon us, that we may know His way upon earth, and His salvation in all nations! — Blessed are they who are pure in the way!... I have chosen the way of truth... I have run in the way..., O Lord, when Thou didst enlarge my heart. Quicken me in the way.

Ps. xxiv, 15.

My eyes are ever towards the Lord, for He shall pluck my feet out of the snare.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE REMAINS WITH YOU ALWAYS

INVITATION

"Behold I am with you all days, even to the consummation of the world. (St. Matt., XXXIII, 29).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

I am not alone, because the Father is with Me.. He has, not left Me alone, for I do, always the things that please Him. (St. John, XVI, 32, VIII, 29).

What causes the greatest suffering, is loneliness. Our Lord Himself wished to experience this suffering; He felt it in all its intensity. During the whole course of His mortal life, He was as a stranger among His own who did not understand Him... and now, in the Blessed Sacrament, He is as an exile!...

Who, better than He, can understand our sadness, our loneliness of heart! He is there in the midst of us, without family, without friends... He is "the great Lonely One, the great Separated One," according to the expression of a saint.

O Jesus! may I enter into Thy solitude!... may I share it, by separating myself voluntarily from all things for Thee, by allowing myself to be separated by Thee, in order to obtain that Thou make Thyself the Companion of my exile, the Friend of my heart, the Life of my life, My

Family, my Country, for time and for eternity.

"Since the Heart of Jesus is jealous of your heart," said St. Margaret Mary to one of her novices, "and since He wishes to possess it alone, you must also be jealous of His, loving it if you can, more than any one else." — Our Savior wishes that we should have familiar intercourse with Him, as a brother with a brother, a friend with a friend, a spouse with her spouse, heart to heart. He thirsts to press us on His sacred Heart, to give us of Its plentitude. "I should wish to have the same disposition of receiving as our Savior has of giving to me," said a holy soul. And she adds: "As I find myself with the good God, I have need of Him at every moment." When we live with a person in one room, we ask him this or that at every moment. Behold! how we ought to act with Jesus. As a little child receives everything from its mother, so ought we to receive everything from Him.

Thou shalt know, says Holy Scripture, that the Lord thy God, He is a strong and faithful God keeping His covenant and mercy to them that love Him and to them that keep His commandments unto a thousand generations. Oh! yes, our God is the DIVINE FAITHFUL ONE Who dwells with us always, Who is always ready to do us good. If He makes voids around us, if He breaks all our bonds, it is only that we may belong more to Him. God takes the place of all that He deprives us of.

At the beginning of his apostolic career, Rev. P. Matheo had the joy of enthroning the Sacred Heart in the home which had just united two young people of the working class. The very day

of their marriage, they had desired to have the King Jesus enter their home. "He will be," they said, "the intimate friend of every moment;" and with love full of child-like confidence they proclaimed Him King of their family life. — Several years later, Father Matheo was called to go to see them: the young woman was seriously ill, and the husband scarcely less so. The poor room in which they lived gave evidence of great misery; but what struck the visitor at once, was a beautiful picture of the adorable Heart of Jesus which, it could be easily seen, had been given the place of honor. After some comforting and consoling words the Father thought he should add: "You are very unfortunate, my poor children." "Unfortunate!" answered the young woman with the accent of the most lively faith her eyes glistening with burning fever, "unfortunate? no, Father, we are not unfortunate! We have suffered, it is true, but we have suffered with Him; — we have wept, it is true, but we have wept with Him. In enthroning Him in our home, you yourself told us, Father, that He would console us in all our pains, that He would sweeten all our sufferings. He has done it, Father... how could you think that we are unhappy? Oh! no, on the contrary, we are very happy, to have Him live with us!"

The love of the Heart of Jesus is not understood... He said to St. Catherine of Sienna: "My daughter, if you only knew how much I love a soul!... It will be the last thing that you will know in this world, for learning it you would die."

Let us suppose a kind hearted person having at his disposition all that could give happiness, always

with us to consider, to seek and to desire to know what might please us, and also to give it to us eagerly; all this would not yet explain what our Lord is to us. Father Lallement wrote that God pays more attention to the government of a single soul than to the government of a whole empire.

Jesus has wished to remain in the most Blessed Sacrament in order to be able to surround us always with His tenderness, to be all things to us; in return, let us not leave Him. When St. Rose of Lima, was still a young child, she was very timid; her mother was still more so. One day, Rose was surprised by night in an oratory some distance from her father's house, and did not dare to leave it. Soon, however, she heard the voice of her mother who had come to seek her, and she was astonished that her mother had ventured out in the darkness. But seeing soon after that she was accompanied by her father, the child said: "I know! my mother is not afraid because she leans on my father's arm, and I, who always have my Savior with me, why should I fear?" Oh! no, I shall never fear again." In fact, she was forever cured of her terrors.

With Jesus, why should we fear? *Even though I should walk through the midst of the shadows of death, I will fear no evil, for Thou art with me.*

— Let us not leave our Savior; let us repeat to Him, after Holy Communion and during the whole day; *Stay with us.* He will answer us: *Fear not,*

for I am with thee; be not afraid, for I am thy God, I will assist and support thee... I have taken thee by the hand, I will keep thee... I have called thee by name, thou art mine.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR KIND FATHER

INVITATION

Children, have you nothing to eat? ... Come and eat. (St. John, xxi, 5, 12.)

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

It is the Lord! (St. John, xxi, 7.)

The Apostles had worked all night and their fishing had been fruitless, when, in the morning, Jesus appeared on the bank and asked them: "*Children, have you nothing to eat?* They answered Him: No." — And Jesus, having procur ed for them an abundant and miraculous draught, said to them: "*Come and eat!*" ... *And none of the disciples dared ask Him: "Who art Thou?" because they knew that it was the Lord.* Such is the simple and touching recital that St. John has made of one of the apparitions of our Lord to His Apostles.

The little ones, have asked for bread, and there was none to break it unto them. Why was there no one? Because He who was to give them food had not yet come; but to-day, He has appeared... He has revealed Himself by His loving solicitude: *Children, have you nothing to eat?* — He makes Himself known by His kindness: *Come and eat.*

A good Father thinks of everything. *The eyes of all hope in Thee, O Lord, and Thou givest them*

Lamentations, Jeremias, v, 4.

meat in due season; Thou openest Thy hand, and fillest with Thy blessing every living creature.

Ps. CXLIV, 15,16.

St. Francis de Sales recommended to one of his spiritual daughters to inculcate this maxim into her mind: That God is our Father, "for otherwise," he wrote, "He would not have commanded

St. Matt., vi, 9.

you to say: *Our Father who art in heaven.* And what have you to fear, you who are the daughter of such a Father, without whose Providence *not*

St. Luke, xxi,18.

a single hair of your head ever fall? It is surprising that being the child of such a Father, we should have or could have any other care but that of loving and serving Him well. Have the care that He wishes you to have for your person and for your family, and no more, for in this way you will see that He will take care of you." "Think of Me," He said to St. Catherine of Sienna, "and I will think of thee." O eternal Father, says the Wise Man, *Thy... Providence governs all.* The holy Director reassured a timid soul in this way:

"Does our Lord think of you and does He regard you with love? Yes, my very dear daughter, He thinks of you, and not only of you, but of the least *hair of your head*, this is an article of faith,

St. Matt., x, 80.

Letters, v. XVIII, and you must in no way doubt it." — Therefore let us say: O Jesus, Thou art my Father; receive me into the arms of Thy divine Providence.

Jesus Christ is Father because He is God. Now, God loves sincerely; He sees from afar as well as near; He gives His attention to doing what is *truly* good for the soul. The *appearances* of good never move the Heart of God; He is too much a Father, He loves too sincerely to do anything that is not wholly beneficial to His creature. — Our

St. F. de Sales,
Letters, v.
XVIII, p. 210.

St. Matt., vi, 9.

St. Luke, xxi,18.

Sap., xiv, 8.

St. Matt., x, 80.

Letters, v. XVIII,
p. 170.

Lord, in quality of true Father, has a jealous care of us. *I was like a foster-father to them*, He says, *I carried them in My arms, and they knew not that I healed them!*... And to St. Margaret Mary: "Could a child loved as much as you are, perish in the arms of an omnipotent Father?"

Osee, xi, 3.

Autobiography.

The Blessed Cure d'Ars delighted in saying that all his mysticism consisted in considering God as His good Father and in acting with Him as a true child. Let us do as did this holy Cure, let us have for our kind heavenly Father a confiding and wholly filial love which will always make us live satisfied with what He does and entirely abandoned to His care. Has not our Savior said: *Be not anxious about what you will eat and with what you will clothe yourselves...* *Your heavenly Father knows that you have need of all these things...* *Fear not, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you His Kingdom.* — *As a father has pity on his children, so the Lord has compassion on those who fear Him.*

St. Luke, xii, 32,
30, 32.

Ps. cii, 13.

The child not only gives itself up to the care of its father, but it acts in dependence on him, it does nothing without his help or counsel. The Apostles *had worked all night and taken nothing*, because they were not with our Lord, their good Father. We also, when we act alone, that is to say without divine grace, multiply as we can our human efforts to do some good, we are *in the night, we take nothing*. But if we recur to Jesus, if we implore His grace, then He Himself acts. "God," says St. Francis de Sales, "calls to His service the things which are not, as well as those which are and makes use of mere nothings as well as of

St. Luke, v, 5.

I. Cor., i, 28.

Letters, Ed. Vi-
ves, v. XI, p.
280.

great things for the glory of His name." Let us remain united to our Lord and act with Him; then our draft will be abundant. The more we are reduced to nothing, the more He will employ us for the service of His Love. Where there is less of ourselves, there is more of God. — For the accomplishment of the greatest things, He ordinarily makes use of the weakest instruments, even of those which sometimes seem contrary to His designs. To Sister Jane Benigna Gojos, an humble lay sister, it was made known that God had delivered two nations from war, on her account.

Oh! how powerful over the Heart of Jesus is a soul thus united to the Savior and dependent on the heavenly Father! How fruitful is her apostolate! — A pious author writes, that, what unites souls is undoubtedly the sacrifices that each one makes of his own person; nevertheless, nothing is so efficacious as the union of our soul with God.

But how can we unite ourselves to our Lord? First of all by Holy Communion, then by prayer which obtains grace; but also by each of our actions, of our joys, of our sorrows, of our sufferings, doing all for God and receiving all from His paternal hand.

Ps. cxi, 8.

To Thee, O Lord, are my eyes raised; in Thee have I put my trust, O Father of mercies. Lord, Thou art our Father; we are the clay, and Thou, He Who has formed us; we are all the work of Thy hand. Behold: we are all Thy people!... Remember, O Lord, Thy tender compassion, and Thy mercies which are from the beginning of the world.

Ps. xxiv, 8; II Cor., 1, 8.

Isaiah, LXIV, 8,9.

Ps. xxiv, 6.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR TREASURE

INVITATION

The kingdom of heaven is like unto a treasure hidden in a field; which a man having found hid it, and, for joy thereof goeth, and selleth all that he hath, and buyeth that field. (St. Matt., XIII, 44.)

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Tell me where you have put Him, and I will go and take Him. (St. John, XX, 15.)

In a well-known vision, St. Margaret Mary heard the Blessed Virgin say to all the Daughters of the Visitation, showing them the Heart of Jesus: "Come... I wish to make you the depositaries of this precious treasure which the divine Son of Justice formed in the virginal soil of my heart, where it was hidden for nine months, after which He manifested Himself to men, who, not knowing its value, despised it because they saw it mixed and covered with their earth... But seeing that far from enriching themselves with such a precious treasure, and making use of it, they have tried to annihilate and exterminate it... from the earth, the eternal Father, by an excess of His mercy, has made use of their malice to augment the value of this precious gold, which, by

the blows they gave Him in His Passion, became an inappreciable money, marked with the coin of the Divinity, with which they could pay their debts . . . ” — And the Saint wrote, after this revelation: “ The Heart of Jesus is a hidden and infinite Treasure which asks for nothing else than to manifest itself, to pour itself out and to distribute itself in order to enrich our poverty. ”

*Letters, v. II,
pp. 405, 406.*

If the Sacred Heart is unquestionably the magnificent heritage of the Visitation, we, however, can all repeat in regarding it: The Heart of Jesus is mine, I dispense it as I please . . . I am very rich, I have a Savior, a Redeemer! . . .

We are, without comparison, much richer in God than poor in ourselves. He “ is so good ”, that “ He allows us to appreciate the treasure of the truly poor, which is the Sacred Heart of Jesus, whose heavenly abundance can without fail satisfy our necessitous indigence. ” The more we are despoiled of creatures, the more fully the Divine Heart is ours. Separation from everything created constitutes our riches as well as our strength. *The eyes of the Lord are on the poor and His ears are attentive to his prayers.*

*Letters of St.
Margaret Ma-
ry, v. II, p. 230.*

Ps. xxxiii, 16.

Without help or support, or gold or domain,
The Saviour is mine, together we reign;
He is my All, my Treasure unsought,
As rich as my God, I want for naught.

Jesus is everything to me and I have everything in Him, I share His fortune.

“ He who finds Jesus finds a precious treasure,

or rather, the good above all goods. He who loses Jesus sustains an immense loss, greater than would be that of the whole world. We are very poor when we live without Jesus, and very rich when we are well with Jesus. It is a great art to know how to live with Jesus, and great wisdom to know how to keep Jesus."

But, "if the Heart of Jesus is a treasure, confidence is the key thereof." This confidence is the patrimony of the poor. Let us listen to the divine Master speaking to St. Gertrude: "The unique regard with which my beloved transpierces My Heart, is the assured confidence that she ought to have in Me that in truth I am wise enough, able and willing to assist her faithfully in all circumstances; because confidence does such violence to my tenderness that I could in no way fail her." *Instructions of Divine Love.*

Imitation of Jesus Christ.
Book II, ch.
viii.

Our Lord is a "Giving God". St. Mechtilde one day heard our Savior say to her: "It is a great pleasure for Me that men expect great things from Me. If one of them hopes of Me that after his life I will overwhelm him with benefits far above his merits, if, in consequence, he renders me thanks for it, he is so pleasing to Me on this account, that no matter how great his faith or his presumption, so much and even more I will remunerate him above his merits. In effect, it is impossible, that man should not receive that which he has believed and expected. Therefore it is useful to man to expect much of Me and to confide strongly in Me."

In every fervent Communion, our Lord renews in us, in an invisible, though very real manner,

Life of St. Mechtilde.

the miracle which He accomplished two hundred years ago in favor of St. Margaret Mary.

"He asked me for my heart," she says, . . . "and He put it into His own adorable Heart where He made me see it like a little atom which is consumed in this ardent furnace, He put it back into the place from whence He had taken it, saying to me: "Behold, My beloved, a precious pledge of My love." — Our Savior does the same thing when we receive Him in Holy Communion: He takes our heart to place it in His, saying to us as to His privileged one: "All that is Mine is yours; My wounds, My blood, My sorrows are yours; My love puts our goods in common . . . — "You shall possess the treasures of My heart . . . I permit you to dispose of them as you please" . . . "Do not be stingy with them, for they are infinite."

Our Lord gives Himself in proportion to our expectation. Therefore it is we who measure the gift, as says St. Francis de Sales: "The measure of God's Providence over us is that of our confidence in Him." We read in Holy Scripture, that as long as the widow of Sarepta had empty vessels to be filled, the oil flowed; but when there were no more, the oil ceased to flow.

A poor little beggar went from door to door; they asked her: — What do you want? What do you ask for? What do you need? — I need everything, answered the child, give me everything. — Touched by her misery and her confidence, they gave her more than if she had asked for one thing only.

O Jesus, listen to Thy poor mendicant creatures,

Autobiography,
v. II, p. 69.

Letters, v. II,
pp. 727, 191.

Cited by St. de
Chantal, *Works*,
v. II, p. 197.

IV Kings, IV, 2-6.

knocking at the door of Thy Heart: We need everything! . . . What wilt Thou answer? . . . "What will you do without Me? You will be very poor! *All that is Mine is thine . . .*" — The divine Master seems to add: Ask, ask, the great solace of My Heart, the great joy of My Heart, is to distribute its treasures.

*Letters, St. Marg.
Mary, v. II, p.
25.*

St. Luke, xv, 31.

I will give you hidden riches and secret treasures . . . You will lend to many nations, and you will borrow of none. "My promises deceive no one, and he who confides in Me will not go away empty-handed. What I have promised, I will give, what I have said, I will accomplish, provided that you persevere in My love until the end." *The Lord is faithful in all His words.*

Isaiah, xlv, 8.

Deuter., xxvii, 13.

*Imitation, Book
III, ch. III.*

Ps. cxliv, 18.

To respond to so much love on the part of our Savior, let us go to Him in Holy Communion every morning, and let us make this prayer of the Imitation: "O Lord, my God, Thou art my only Good. And I, what am I? I am Thy poor little servant, I am poorer than I know or dare to say. Remember, O Lord, that I am nothing, that I have nothing and that I can do nothing. Thou alone art good, just and holy; Thou canst do all, Thou givest all, Thou fillest all. *Remember Thy mercies* and fill my heart with Thy grace, Thou who dost not wish Thy works to be incomplete. *Lord, teach me to do Thy will,* for Thou art my Wisdom, my Treasure."

Ps. xxiv, 6.

Ps. cxlii, 10.

Book III, ch. III.

O my God, I would fill the world with Thee! I would put all the sinners of this earth in possession of Thy heaven, that they might praise and

love Thee forever. I would be a beggar for Thy treasures, a mendicant of love for all men...

With St. Francis de Sales, let us also love to abase ourselves in presence of this ineffable Treasure, invoking Mary: "How shall man, that is my misery, approach Thy *sublime Heart?*... (*Accedet homo ad cor altum:*) How shall I go from dust and ashes even unto heaven? Oh! my Advocate, ladder of heaven, mountain of God, bond by which the greatness of God unites itself to my misery, grant that by Thee my misery may reach God... Open this secret Treasure to us, for behold Thy Son Jesus, overflowing with the super-abundance of His treasures, cries out: *Gather up my wealth!*"

Sermons, v. VIII,
pp. 45, 46.

The mercies of the Lord I will sing forever. I will show forth Thy truth with my mouth to generation and generation; For Thou hast said: Mercy shall be built up forever in the heavens, Thy truth shall be established in them.

O Lord... who is like unto Thee? Thou art mighty, O Lord and Thy truth is round about Thee... Thine are the heavens, and Thine is the earth; the world and the fulness thereof, Thou hast founded...

I will praise Thee O Lord my God... with my whole heart, for Thy mercy is great toward me. Thou, O Lord, art a God of compassion and merciful, slow to anger, rich in goodness and truth.

Ps. LXXXVIII, 1,
8, 9, 12.

Ps. LXXXV, 12, 15.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR DOMAIN

INVITATION

Fear not, little flock, for it has pleased your Father to give you a Kingdom. (St. Luke, XII, 32).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Our Father who art in heaven,
Thy Kingdom come. (St.
Matt. vi, 9, 10).*

What is often the cause of our sadness, of our fears? It is this: we do not sufficiently reflect on what God has placed in our hands, and we pay too much attention to what seems lacking to us. — God has given us His grace, He has placed at our disposition His divine Son, the summary of all the gifts of His bounty. He is for us this *Kingdom*, this chosen portion which has been prepared for us from the foundation of the world. He is our possession and encloses in Himself all that we could desire... He is the *one thing necessary*, in Him we find all that is necessary for our being; He is our life. *The Lord is my portion, my inheritance, my share, my lot.* — All things are from Him, by Him and for Him, and, according to the word of a holy soul, "HIS FORTUNE is ours!..." Truly, we can say after an author: "In

Ps. cxviii. 57.
xv, 5.
Rom. xi. 86.

heaven in a little while and holy Communion every day, why not suffer, and be patient with a humble and holy joy! . . . ”

One day, just before going to Holy Communion, St. Gertrude said to our Lord: “What wilt Thou give me”? — “I will give you Myself as I gave Myself to My Mother,” answered our Lord. — “Oh!” said St. Gertrude, “can Thy divinity be pleased or find its glory in coming into the heart of an unworthy creature like me?” — “You forget”, said our Savior, “that the love of My Heart makes Me find delights where My elect think I will never find them.” From that time, St. Gertrude experienced so great a desire for Holy Communion, that she felt herself disposed to go through a forest of swords to reach the holy Table.

St. Margaret Mary had so great a desire for Holy Communion, that if it had been necessary to go barefoot over a road of fire, this pain would have been nothing in comparison with the privation of so great a good. And did not the Divine Master once console her by the words: “My daughter, your desire has so penetrated My Heart, that if I had not yet instituted this sacrament of love, I would do so now to become your food . . .

to have the pleasure of abiding in your soul and taking My repose of love in your heart.” Listening to this language of our divine Savior, let us excite in ourselves a thirst for Holy Communion, and when a legitimate reason prevents our communicating sacramentally, let us make spiritual Communions, by an ardent desire to receive our Lord.

*The Heart of St.
Gertrude.*

*Autobiography
and Letters, t.
II, pp. 105,
364.*

This good Master showed one of His faithful lovers all the Communions that she had made: the sacramental Communions were in a golden Ciborium and the spiritual in a silver Ciborium.

The immense desire of our Lord, is that we should communicate frequently, the Church tells us so in formal terms; She declared in the Council of Trent that the best preparation for one Communion is another Communion, and that the intention of God and the Church is that the faithful should communicate every time they assist at the Holy Sacrifice. If they assist thereat every day, they ought to communicate every day: "provided that they are in a state of grace and approach the holy Table with an upright intention, which consists in communicating to satisfy the will of God and to unite themselves to Him more intimately."

With the consent of our Spiritual Father, let us communicate every day; let us communicate throughout the day by our ardent desire of receiving Jesus and of uniting ourselves to Him. "For every one of the faithful can spiritually approach the Communion of Jesus Christ at every hour... The soul communicates mystically and receives its nourishment invisibly every time that it meditates with piety on the mystery of the Incarnation and on the sufferings of Jesus Christ and that she inflames herself with His love."

Jesus condescends to make Himself our property, our good, our domain. All that is His belongs to us, according to His divine word: *My son, you are always with Me, and all that I have*

Decree of Feb.
14, 1906.

Imitation, Book
IV, ch. x.

St. Luke, xv, 81. *is yours. "It is in the mystery of the Eucharist,"* says the Council of Trent, *"that Jesus distributes liberally the riches and the profusion of His love. Always amiable, always loving, He is especially so in the Holy Eucharist."* There, more than anywhere else, He is ours, He is our immense Domain. *Confide in the Lord and do good; you will inhabit the earth and you will be fed with its riches. Delight in the Lord, and He will give you the desires of your heart.* — "Grant, O Lord Jesus, that we may be clothed with the virtues of Thy most Sacred Heart and that we may be inflamed with its affections, that becoming conformed to the image of Thy goodness, we may merit to participate in the fruits of Thy Redemption."

Office of the
Feast of the
Sacred Heart.

But, shall we be satisfied to "enjoy the presence of Jesus" and to possess all His riches?... Is it not reasonable", remarks St. Francis de Sales, "that we offer Him the moments of time that we have to *live*, and that we render our being, miserable as it is, an object of *joy* to Him, with all the perfection of which we are capable without reserving to ourselves a single moment, nor any part of our life, nor a single one of our actions?..." The Savior is our DOMAIN; let us also be His, He has the right to it...

What greater happiness than that of possessing Him, while He possesses us!... Let us lose ourselves in His Heart which is open to us to inebriate us with His Charity. 'There is no corner so secret that we cannot penetrate it. Nothing will be closed to us... We will go and come, we will come in and go out as we please", provided that,

P.Caussade, S.J.,
Abandonment
to Divine Pro-
vidence.

banishing all fear and forgetting ourselves completely, we offer ourselves to Him with a heart dilated by love and an unbounded confidence in His infinite merits, our FORTUNE, our PROPERTY. — Who would complain of his unworthiness, possessing such riches?... Who would find himself straightened in the immensity of this DOMAIN?...

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR PEACE

INVITATION

Peace be with you; it is I, fear not. (St. Luke, xxiv, 36).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

He has redeemed us . . . that we may serve Him without fear . . . He is come to direct our feet into the way of peace. (St. Luke, I, 68, 74, 79).

Our peace, is our Lord Jesus Christ, He made Ephes., II, 14. Himself our peace in giving Himself to us as our Savior. In Him, justice and peace have embraced each other. Hence, as soon as He appeared Ps. LXXXIV, 11. on earth, this peace is the glad tidings that the Angels at once proclaim. *Glory to God! His Justice is satisfied; peace on earth! man has a Savior.*

All the labors, all the sufferings of our Lord had for their end to assure peace to us; and when He was on the point of leaving His apostles to consummate the work of our Redemption, it was the precious inheritance that He left them, it was the parting gift that He made them: *My peace I leave you, My peace I give you.*

And after His Resurrection, He hastened to go to console His disciples and to confirm to them the gift that He had made them, as if to prove to them that He had not forgotten His promises: *Peace be with you, fear not, it is I.*

St. John, XIV, 27.

Peace is for a soul union with God, intimacy with our Lord, the reign of God in her and the harbinger of the eternal happiness for which we are created. In the school of St. Francis de Sales, we learn that even if everything should be overthrown, this should not trouble or diminish in the least our interior life, which consists in this disposition of peace established on mortification and the renunciation of all acts of the human will: No matter what happens, do we not know that God is there, that everything is willed or permitted by Him?... With this conviction, why not remain in peace? There is here no question of the peace which the world seeks, but of the *peace of God*, in which He makes His abode, of the peace which has its principal in God. — *Be attentive to My commandments, and your peace will be as a river.* — *If any man loves Me, he will keep My commandments, and My Father will love him, and we will come to him and we will make our abode in him.*

Isaiah, XLVIII, 18.

St. John, XIV, 28.

Isaiah, IX, 6.

“Our Lord is called the *Prince of Peace* in Holy Scripture”, writes the holy Bishop of Geneva; “and therefore wherever He is absolute Master, He keeps everything in peace... We must in all and above all live peaceably. If interior or exterior sorrows should come to us, we must receive them with peace. When joy comes to us, we must receive it with peace, without losing our calm. When obliged to flee from evil, we must do so peacefully, without trouble; for otherwise, we might fall in our flight and give the enemy time to kill us. When we have some good to do, we must do it

peacefully; or we will commit many faults by hurrying. Even in doing penance, we must act peaceably." *Behold, says Ezechias, my most bitter bitterness is in peace. — The meek will enjoy the delights of an abundant peace.*

*Letters, v. XIII,
pp. 89-81.*

*Is., xxxviii, 17.
Ps. xxxvi, 11.*

Our Lord said: *I came from the Father... and I return to the Father.* He said this with a supernatural knowledge that we are not permitted to have; but, by our union with Him, we also, according to our supernatural capacity, can say: I came from God, I return to God Who is my end, to Whom my soul should unite itself.

St. John, xvi, 28.

I come from God — ineffable word!
I go to Him like a homing bird,
I do not walk alone each day
A loving Brother guides my way,
My sweetest joy while here below.—
I come from God, to Him I go,
Ah! be my exile short or long,
This is my heart's exultant song;
Let nothing stop me with my Guide
I go to God by Jesus' side.

This truth is very suitable for establishing us in peace, notwithstanding the events of life, and it is in this peace that our true life consists. The soul profits greatly by this disposition of peace; therefore it ought to do everything to procure it. What gives peace, is to adhere to God, to depend on Him for willing the present thing as it happens, without wishing more or less. In a word, it is to live in the accomplishment of the will of God.

Nothing can trouble a soul that wills only what

God wills for her. "The will of God is our centre", says St. Francis de Sales; "out of it there is only trouble and anxiety."

Should we procure peace in order to be quiet and tranquil? — that we may pass our life happily? No, for the peace of which we speak is not a human peace, a peace which rejoices nature: it is a supernatural peace that comes from God, and we must secure it for our souls because it is the will of God that we should have it, because it is the fruit of the Passion and Death of our Lord, because it is our Savior's desire for us. We must not desire it for the good that we will find in it, but because such is the good Pleasure of God.

The Savior, behold *our peace!* Let us trust ourselves to Him, let us receive Him in Holy Communion, let us remain near Him; then we will have that peace wherein God makes His abode and manifests Himself. When we find ourselves in "trouble and disquietude", let us follow the advice of St. Margaret Mary: let us go and "plunge ourselves into the peace of the adorable Heart" of Jesus, "which no one can take from us"; there, we will sing with the Psalmist: *In peace, I will sleep and take my repose, for Thou alone, O Lord, wilt establish me in security.*

"Grant, O good Jesus, that we may receive the peace that Thou offerest to us, and that we may see Thy wounds" which have acquired it for us.

— "Deign to accord to our prayers the pardon of our offenses and true peace, that being purified from all our sins, we may serve Thee in the tranquility of a holy Confidence."

Works, v. II, p. 754.

Ps. iv, 9, 10.

St. Francis de Sales, *Sermons, v. VII, p. 171.*

Collect for the XX Sunday after Pentecost.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE ALONE IS CAPABLE OF SATISFYING YOUR HEART

INVITATION

I have compassion on the multitude, because they continue with Me, now three days and have not what to eat: I will not send them away fasting, lest they faint on the way.
(St. Matt., xv, 32.)

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Where then should we find so many loaves in the desert as to fill so great a multitude?
(Ibid., vers. 38).

God has pronounced over the soul of each one of us this word of sovereign compassion: *I have pity!*... But on those who follow Him, He cast a regard of predilection, and it is towards them that His Bounty delights to exercise itself. The soul who follows our Lord constantly accomplishes "the three days in the desert"; that is to say she keeps herself united to Him by her thoughts, her desires, her affections. Happy shall we be if we thus follow our divine Master, without having *anything to eat*, for He will never permit us to want for anything. "*The Lord rules me, I shall want nothing.*" He Himself will set the table for Ps. xxii, 1.

us, and after having made us sit down, He will make Himself our divine Provider, filling us with the bread of His Charity, with this delicious and substantial bread that the desert could not supply.

St. Francis de
Sales, *Sermons*,
v. X, p. 44.

“God has reserved to Himself... the power to give us perfect satisfaction... not wishing that we should find any place for our love out of Himself, so jealous is He of us.” Therefore, St. Augustine cried out: “Lord, Thou hast made me for Thyself, and *I shall always be restless until I rest in Thee.*”

God alone can fill our heart. — We need to be understood, to be loved; Jesus alone can fully understand us, can love us as we need to be loved. He is the God of infinite Charity Who has placed love in the heart of all mothers, of all loving hearts... All these great loves united are only as a drop of water in comparison with the ocean of love, which is the Heart of Jesus!... *Can a Mother forget her child? He says to us by His Prophet; and even if she should forget it, I will never forget you: for I bear you graven on My hands.* Let us

Is., xlix, 15, 16.

then go to Jesus. He will understand us... He will love us.

We need also to be loved, our heart is made for love: let us love our Savior, we can go as far as we will in our love for Him.

To love is not to feel that we love; to love is to trust one's self to Him Whom we love; it is to be sure of Him, it is to sacrifice one's self for Him, it is to love all that He does, all that He loves, it is to confide one's self to Him blindly and implicitly, it is to adhere to His divine Will

by saying, "YES," to everything. *Ita Pater, Yes Father.*

St. Matt., xi, 26.

"It happens sometimes," St. Francis de Sales tells us "that we have as much and more love than ever, and notwithstanding we believe the contrary, inasmuch as we have no sentiment of love. O certainly, there is a great difference between the love which makes us do good, and the sentiment of love, I mean that sentiment that fills our soul and mind with great satisfaction, and gives to our heart such a sensible consolation, that sometimes it even overflows exteriorly. Now, when God withdraws this sentiment, we must not be discouraged or think that we have no love, provided that we have a strong resolution of never displeasing Him, for in this perfect and true love

Sermons, v. IX,
p. 470.

There are dear ones that God has given us to love, we wish to devote ourselves to them, to love them truly; but sometimes, alas! we are powerless. Let us remit them to our divine Love, it is His Heart that will love them, that will devote Itself in our stead; He Himself will be our gratitude towards them.

Let us press our hearts against that of the Savior, and when we possess Him by Holy Communion let us say to Him: "O Jesus, Thou art the LIFE OF MY HEART AND THE HEART OF MY LIFE."

Our mind cannot be satisfied except by our Lord. Hungry for beauty, for light, for science, our intelligence seeks everywhere nourishment which will fully satiate it, but it seeks in vain. Let us go to Jesus. He will enlighten us, *The Lord is my*

Ps. xxvi, 1.

light. Let us unite ourselves to Him by Holy Communion, by our intimate life with Him, by our continual recourse to His Heart; He will reveal and discover Himself to us. He Who loves me will be loved by My Father, this good Savior says to us, *and I will love him and will manifest Myself to him.*

St. John, xiv, 21.

I am the Lord your God, Who will teach you all things useful. — Who will deliver our mind from its perplexities, from its solicitudes, if not our Lord? He Who knows everything, Who can do everything, and Who loves us?

Is., XLVII, 7.

And our soul, who can satisfy it, if not Jesus? Poor soul, often in anguish, in darkness, in powerlessness! She will find her strength, her support in her trust in her Savior; she knows that He never changes, that He is infinite Goodness, the divine faithful One, Love itself; she knows that according to a word of St. Francis de Sales, God loves and succors the miserable, provided that they hope in Him.

In Jesus *alone* shall we find all that is necessary for us. He is all things to us and we have everything in Him.

The Doctor of piety delightfully depicts the divine jealousy pursuing the soul that seeks some satisfaction outside of God: "I will tell you a very agreeable example on this subject," said the Saint. "His Holiness had a singer, whom he loved very much, for he sang remarkably well. Although this singer was so much loved by his Master, he one day took a fancy to go away and to leave the Court, which he did, leaving his good

Master very angry at his departure. The Pope, considering by what means he could see him again, resorted to this artifice: he wrote to all the princes and great ones that if this singer should present himself to them, they should not receive him into their service; judging that if he did not find a better retreat the singer would at last return to him. Everything happened as the Pope had desired; for seeing himself rejected by everyone, the singer returned to serve in the incomparable chapel of His Holiness.

The human heart is a singer, infinitely beloved of God, Who is the sovereign Holiness; but the singer is very capricious and whimsical. You cannot imagine how God rejoices in hearing the praises that are given to Him by the heart that loves Him; He takes great pleasure in the outburst of our voices and in the harmony of our music. However, the fancy to wander seizes this heart, which is not satisfied to satisfy its Savior unless it find also some self-satisfaction. Insuperable folly! for what happiness, what grace and what subject of perfect contentment is comparable to that of being loved by God and remaining in the house of His divine Majesty, that is to say, of having placed in Him all our love, without any other pretension than that of being agreeable to Him! And notwithstanding, see how this human heart allows itself to be carried away by its fancy, goes from creature to creature, from house to house, to see if it cannot find some one who will receive it and give it perfect contentment; but, in vain, for God, Who has reserved

this singer for Himself alone, has commanded all creatures, of every nature, not to give it either satisfaction or consolation of any kind whatever, so that by this means it will be constrained to return to Him, Who is this Master, good with an incomparable goodness. And even if the singer returns more frequently by force than by love, instead of rebuffing him, He does not cease to receive him and to give him the same office as before in His chapel; it would even seem, that

Sermons, v. X,
p. 44.

He gives him still more. Oh! how great is the goodness of our God."

Our Body is also satisfied by Jesus. Are we sick, tired, exhausted? Let us draw close to Jesus: He will cure us, He will relieve us, He will restore us.

Everything in us is made for God, everything in us ought to love Him. "He has put the acquisition of His pure love in our power... He gives it to everyone who gives Him his." A reciprocal exchange, which constitutes our completeness here below, and the satiety of the elect. Theologians tell us the marvellous effects of the act of pure love:

St. Francis de Sales, ibid., p. 46.

1. "The perfect act of love reconciles immediately with God, souls most heavily charged with mortal sins, even before Confession and Absolution, provided that they have the will to go to Confession. With much greater reason does the act of pure love purify us of venial sins.

2. The act of perfect love diminishes the pains of Purgatory, and can even efface them entirely, if it is produced with the fervor and perfection of which God alone knows the measure.

3. Every act of perfect love merits for us for this life an increase of sanctifying grace, and for Heaven a ray of eternal glory. One minute of love can give us an eternity of love."

"Cause the Heart of Jesus to be loved!... One more act of love, one more ejaculatory prayer, what glory for Him"

*Opusc. How we
should Love
God.*

P. Matheo.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS THE BREAD OF GOD

INVITATION

My Father giveth you the true bread from heaven; for the Bread of God is that which cometh down from heaven, and giveth life to the world.
(St. John, vi, 32, 33).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Our Father, give us this day our supersubstantial bread.
(St. Matt., vi, 11.)

What sign therefore dost Thou show that we may believe in Thee? asked the Jews of our Lord. St. John, vi, 30.
And nevertheless they had been witnesses of many prodigies, they had seen the Lord Jesus restore hearing to the deaf, speech to the dumb, sight to the blind,... yet they were not convinced: *Our fathers, they said, did eat manna in the desert...*
but Thou, *what miracles dost Thou?* They new St. John, vi, very well that the promised Redeemer would give to man a heavenly bread, of which the manna was only a figure. And the Savior answering their request unveils Himself to them as the Messiah Whose mission is confirmed by the gift that He makes them of the true bread of heaven: *Moses, says He, did not give you Bread from heaven; he was a man, subject to death like ourselves, how*

could he give the Bread from heaven, the Bread which gives life? *My Father giveth you the true Bread from heaven, for the Bread of God descends from heaven and gives life to the world. He that eateth this Bread shall live forever.*

St. John, IV, 59.

Therefore we, the children of God, ask our Father for our daily bread, that Bread which nourishes our souls for eternal life. Our Lord in teaching us the *Pater*, and in making us say "give us our daily bread," did not have in view the material bread only which supports our body, but still more the true *Bread of life*, of the Holy Eucharist. "How great is the love of our God," exclaims St. Francis de Sales, "Who, to render Himself more ours, has willed to give Himself to us in food for the spiritual health of our hearts, so that nourishing them, they might become more perfect... Often salute the Heart of this divine Savior, Who to testify His love for us, has willed to hide Himself under the appearance of bread, so as to abide very familiarly and very intimately in us and near our heart."

Nothing is more ours than the nourishment that we absorb; it is that He may belong to us in the most intimate manner that Jesus comes to us under the appearance of a little bread. Just as our body is strengthened without our seeing the operations of food, so our soul is transformed in communicating, without our understanding how.

"Those who have good corporal digestion," writes St. Francis de Sales, "experience an increase of strength throughout their body. In like manner, those who have good spiritual digestion,

Letters, v. XVII,
pp. 222, 221.

feel that Jesus Christ, Who is their food, opens His Heart and communicates Himself to all the parts of their soul and body. They have Jesus Christ in their mind, in their heart, in their breast, in their eyes, in their hands, in their tongue, in their ears, in their feet. But what does this Savior do there? He renovates everything, He purifies everything, He mortifies everything, He vivifies everything. He loves in the heart, He understands in the brain, He animates in the breast, He sees by the eyes, He speaks by the tongue, and so of the rest: He does all in all, and then we live, not we, *but Jesus Christ lives in us*. Oh! when will this be, my God, when will it be? However, I show you to what we should pretend, although we must be content to attain it little by little."

Galat., 13, 20.

Letters, v. XIII,
p. 357.

"In my solitude of the year 1684," relates the Lover of the Sacred Heart, "my Sovereign Master made me understand that He Himself had impressed in my heart the holy life that He leads in the Eucharist, a life entirely hidden and annihilated before the eyes of men, a life of death and sacrifice..." Was it not the same thought of annihilation and immolation that inspired the Bishop of Geneva with these lines: "He who communicates according to the spirit of the Divine Spouse, annihilates himself and says to our Lord: "Crush me, annihilate me and convert me into Thee"..." Our Lord has gone to such an excess of love as to make Himself our food. And we, what should we not do, that He may possess us, that He may use us, that He may masticate

Works, v. II, p.
198, 196.

Letters, v. XVIII, p. 400. us, that He may swallow and swallow us again, that He may do with us as He pleases."

The holy Cure d'Ars, exhorting his people to approach the Eucharistic banquet often said to them: "Go to Communion, go to Jesus with love and confidence; go to live with Him, in order to be able to live for Him." Yes, let us draw near to our Lord, but to please Him we must have great confidence which answers in some way to the goodness that we see in Him. He has done the impossible for us; we must hope for the same, He desires it.

An author, speaking of the action of Jesus Christ in our soul, said: "He uplifts us, He carries us, He purifies us, He effaces sin, He repairs, He restores, He creates, He enlightens, He renews us." We could add: He consoles, he fortifies. We never approach Jesus without experiencing His power and His sweet influence.

"O sacred Bread of life! as I come to Thee in the simplicity of my faith to nourish and sustain myself with Thy precious Blood, give Thyself to me also in the sweetness and plentitude of Thy love."

We all know the story of the soldier who was dying far from his native soil, far from his family. He had at home a mother and father. The latter, strong in his love, did not calculate the distance that separated him from his dying child... He set out... He would do all that he could to restore him to life. The pallor of death already covered the face of the dying son, but the sight of his father reanimated him. "O my son, you will not die,"

St. Francis de Sales, *Opuscules*, ed. Vives, v. III, p. 242.

exclaimed the father, "my tenderness will save you. Take this bread and eat it, your mother made it, it is BREAD TROM HOME!" "Oh! some bread from home?" murmured the son... He ate some, and soon came back to life. His father had saved him!... A touching image of what God the Father does for us. Poor exiles! without strength in the way of life, we should have died, if our Father in Heaven, had not put at our disposition, *the true Bread of our home*, Jesus-Hostia. Let us eat Him, and we shall live. — *Lord, give us always of this bread!*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR HEAVEN

INVITATION

Come, ye blessed of My Father, possess the kingdom which has been prepared for you from the beginning of the world. (St. Matt., xxv, 34).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, show us this bread, and it is enough for us. (St. John, xiv, 8),

Heaven is the possession of God in Love. The Saints found heaven everywhere, because they knew how to find God everywhere, to love Him and to possess Him. *What shall separate us from the charity of Jesus Christ?* exclaimed St. Paul. *Shall tribulation, or anguish, or persecution, or hunger, or nakedness?... I am persuaded that neither death nor life... nor height, nor depth, nor any creature can separate us from the charity of God, which is Jesus Christ, our Lord.*

Rom., viii, 35, 38,
89.

Let us enter into the sentiments of the saints; let nothing separate us from God or from His love. Every morning, God the Father addresses this loving invitation to us: "Come, you whom I have blessed and predestined... Come, enter into possession of the kingdom that I have prepared for

you. This "kingdom" is our Lord, it is His adorable flesh, His holy Humanity that we receive in Holy Communion. Not only do we enter into possession of our heaven, but Heaven enters into us, St. Luke, xvii, 21. it remains in us. *The kingdom of God is within you.*

That which forms the happiness of the elect ought to constitute ours. They see only God, they are lost in Him; we also see only God. In truth, we can say of all that surrounds us, of everything that happens to us: *It is the Lord.* Creatures appear to the creature, but to the soul of faith, it will be the will of God, it will be our Lord Himself Who will appear to make His suggestions, to express His intentions, to communicate to us His desires, to tell us what He asks of us, what He wills; and recognizing God in created things, the soul united to Him will do them for Him; she will give, she will sacrifice everything that grace asks of her.

What constitutes the happiness of heaven is acquiescence in the will of God, the elect are abyssed in the will of God. This ought also to be our part. — My good Savior, I know that Thou willest or permittest this thing, so I love it just as it is. I know that it is by love for me that Thou permittest it; I know that *all things work unto good for those who love God.* "Yes, even sins, which God in His goodness forbids" wrote St. Francis de Sales, "are, by Divine Providence, made to work for the good of those who belong to Him. David would never have been so humble if he had not sinned, nor Magdalen so filled with love for her Savior if He had not forgiven her sins, and

St. John, xxi, 7.

Rom., viii, 28.

He would never have forgiven them if she had not committed them. This great Artisan of mercy converts our miseries into graces. If then some displeasure should afflict you, no matter from what source, assure your soul that if it love God, all will be converted into good. And though you may not see the channels by which good will reach you, remain so much the more assured that it will come. If God casts the mire of ignominy over your eyes, it is to give you a clearer sight and make you a spectacle of honor. If God causes you to fall, like St. Paul, whom He cast upon the earth, it is to lift you up to glory."

Cf. St. John, ix, 6,
7, 11.

Acts, ix, 4.

Letters, v. XVIII,
p. 209.

If we are penetrated with this view of faith, we shall cry out: O most sweet will of my God, mayest thou be forever done! In all occurrences, we will experience that the will of God is the only Refuge of our will, and its accomplishment our consolation, our heaven. Paradise on earth is the Will of God known, loved and accomplished.

When we **BELIEVE** in the divine Goodness, we commence to enjoy here below the happiness of Heaven. The soul who has understood the Heart of the Savior is established, in the midst of all things, in an uninterrupted feast. A feast, a true feast is God living in the midst of us: not God seen, tasted, felt, but God **BELIEVED** in; it is God present everywhere, enveloping us, touching us, penetrating us, transforming us into Himself.

"A feast is the real presence of our Lord in the Tabernacle, it is the continual presence of the Most Holy Trinity in us."

"A feast is our state of grace and the intercourse

that it establishes between God and us; it is our intimate union with our Lord, it is each act of love, each act of union of heart and of will.

"A feast is also every humiliation that attracts the Holy Spirit. The soul that humbles herself becomes the abode of the Holy Spirit: He takes complacency in her, He reposes in her. He fills her to overflowing.

*Mère Ponnet,
Subjects of
prayer.*

"A feast is each suffering: to suffer patiently is a signal act of love."

Heaven is to contemplate the adorable Heart of Jesus!... To contemplate It as the Heart the most noble, the most beautiful, the most delicate, the most generous, the most tender, the most compassionate, the most abounding in love... and TO BELIEVE with assurance that He is all this, to believe it by an act of lively faith.

Heaven is union begun here below... it is our GOD IN ALL.

A feast, Heaven, is God known, glorified: it is the reign of the Divine Heart!

*Imit., Book II,
chap. 8.*

A feast, in fine Heaven is Himself, Jesus, it is His Heart. "To be with Jesus is a sweet Paradise." All souls who wish to follow Him by faith and love will taste this Paradise. Thus no matter what the pains of this life may be, if we are in a state of grace, we are the happy ones who are advancing to eternal joy.

"Grant us, we beseech Thee, O Almighty God, that believing firmly that Thy only Son, our Redeemer, has this day, ascended to heaven, we may also live there in spirit by the ardor of our desires."

*Collect for the
feast of the
Ascension.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS THE GIFT OF GOD

INVITATION

If thou didst know the gift of God! . . . God so loved the world as to give His only begotten Son. (St. John, iv, 10, iii, 16).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

I confess to Thee, O Father . . . because thou hast hid these things from the wise and prudent and hast revealed them to little ones. Yes, Father, for so hath it seemed good in thy sight. (St. Matt., xi, 25, 26).

It is a God Who speaks of love, and He speaks of it with a divine admiration: *God so loved the world! . . .* It was not sufficient for Him to give us existence, to assure us of the means of knowing Him and of reaching Him, but He has wished to establish between Himself and us a bond of charity; and this bond, this POINT OF CONNECTION between God and His creature is our Savior Jesus Christ. The Savior is thus the Present, the Gift God has made us; this is the charity which His infinite mercy has bestowed on our extreme indigence. And as all that the Father does the Son does likewise, our Savior has not only allowed Himself to be given to us, He has given Himself, and in an ineffable manner, in the Holy Eucharist.

The Incarnation is the Gift God has made to the entire humanity, the Eucharist is the personal gift offered to each soul. *If we knew the gift of God!* A holy prelate said, addressing Himself to some religious: "Do you know why our Savior chose Saint Margaret Mary to reveal to her His Heart? It is because the heart does not reveal itself save when it knows that it will be understood, and our Savior knew that in disclosing His Heart to the humble religious, she would understand its love."

In revealing His Heart to Margaret Mary, Jesus has given it to each one of our souls. And we receive this perfect gift when we communicate: let us profit by it... If we understood well what the Tabernacle is we would besiege it, we would always have our eyes fixed upon it. *How lovely are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts!*

It is not only at the sacrifice of the Mass, in the partaking of the Sacraments, in Holy Communion, in prayer, that we may receive the amorous effusions of this adorable Heart; but in all the actions of the day. We should unceasingly unite ourselves to our Savior and consider how He acted when He was upon earth, in order to act as He did.

We do not look often enough at our divine Model; this is nevertheless the most necessary and surest means of being instructed and helped. We do not sufficiently consult Him, we do not "make use" of Him, it seems as if He were a stranger in our affairs; we take our resolutions by ourselves, instead of taking them with Him,

in Him. To us, as to the Samaritan, Jesus can say: *If you knew the gift of God.*

The *gift of God* is every indication of the divine will. The will of God contains every good in itself and the only good. Independently of my happiness, I wish to love the divine will because it is the gift of God to my soul. I wish to love it because it includes all good. — My God, I wish to live in your will, I wish to lose myself in your will.

*But I have put my trust in thee O Lord: I said:
Thou art my God: my lots are in thy hands.*

Ps. xxx, 15.

The gift of God is Jesus living among us, it is the Tabernacle, the Host!... It is Jesus living in us, by His grace. *For of Him, and by Him, and in Him are all things.* These words illuminate our life, they direct its course. In our profound misery, the word, *in Him are all things* forms our succor and our hope; in our poverty it becomes our riches.

Rom., xi, 86.

Of him are all things, that is to say, all comes from Him, all flows from Him, not only one grace, not only one virtue, but **ALL!**...

All things are by Him. He does all in the soul which abandons itself to Him. Let us say yes always, a prompt, loving, joyous yes; yes to every mortification, to every humiliation, to every suffering, to every contradiction. We shall then understand supernatural joy, because we shall understand that Jesus is all, and that all the rest is nothing, that He merits all and that we should give Him all.

All things are in Him, and He is ours. Ours,

because He gives Himself to whoever wants Him; He gives Himself without regard of persons; He gives Himself to the greatest sinners; He gives Himself without reserve!... *What is there more that I ought to do to my vineyard, that I have not done to it?*

Isaiah, v, 4.

Let us contemplate with a long look of gratitude, of confidence, and of love the summary of all these gifts: the INCARNATION. *And the Word was made flesh!..*

St. John, i, 14.

Bethlehem, Nazareth, with its life of poverty, of labor (often so rude), of profound annihilation; the three years of public life with its journeyings, its fatigue, the cold, the hunger, contempt, derisions, misunderstandings, failures, abandonments, the unbelief and the agony; the Passion, in which there were no affronts or torments, no confusions or sorrows to which our divine Savior did not submit. And Calvary, where He was abandoned even by His Father!... And the Blessed Sacrament!...

And the GIFT of the Holy Spirit!... *I will ask the Father, and He will give you another Paraclete, that He may abide with you forever.* The Holy Spirit is God coming in His infinite charity to take up His abode in the heart of His creature, and to dwell there as long as his creature wishes, and to repose therein as long as his creature desires. *You shall know him because he shall abide with you, and shall be in you.*

St. John, xiv, 16.

All this is for us; all this is ours!...

O my soul, understand thy happiness!... Thou

St. John, xiv, 17.

hast within thee an interior abode... and, in this abode, thy God Who never leaves Thee!...

The value of one sigh of the Savior, of one drop of His blood would have sufficed to redeem thousands of worlds... And this profusion of merits, of sufferings He has given to us through love. Our life should be passed in making use of them!

Not only has the Divine Master redeemed us for the sin of Adam, but also for all our life; each day we receive a new redemption by the application of the merits of our Savior. Should we not be penetrated with gratitude and should we not repeat with St. Paul: *Thanks be to God for His ineffable GIFT!* And with the Psalmist: *The Lord is sweet to all and his tender mercies are over all his works.*

II Cor., ix, 15.

Ps. ccliv, 9.

To testify to Him my gratitude, I will profit by His gift... "I will fill myself with God... enrich myself with God... fill myself with divine charity... Divine charity is the easiest thing to acquire; if we are poor it is our own fault.

"O Heart of my Savior, I confess in truth that I am the most miserable of Thy creatures. Nevertheless, satisfy Thy love by enriching my extreme indigence with the infinite treasure which is none other than Thyself; give Thyself the joy of pouring Thyself into me in proportion to my nothingness, my profound necessity, and in proportion to Thy divine magnificence and inclination, for Thy glory and divine pleasure."

"Rejoice, O my soul, and give thanks unto God for so noble a gift; for so often as thou

Mère Ponnet
Subjects of
prayer.

Imit., Book IV,
ch. II.

repeatest this mystery and receivest the body of Christ, so often dost thou perform the work of the Redemption".... *Bless the Lord, O my soul, and never forget all he hath done for Thee. Who forgiveth all thy iniquities: who healeth all thy diseases. Who redeemeth thy life from destruction: who crowneth thee with mercy and compassion. Who satisfieth thy desire with good things.*

Bless the Lord... you ministers of his that do his will.

*Bless the Lord, all his works, in every place of
Ps. cii,2,5,21,22. his dominion, O my soul, bless thou the Lord!*

How great are thy works. O Lord thou hast made all things in wisdom: the earth is filled with thy riches... All expect of thee that thou give them food in season. What thou givest to them they shall gather up; when thou openest thy hand, they shall all be filled with good.

I will praise the name of God with a canticle: and I will magnify him with praise, and it shall please God.

Ps. lxviii, 81,82.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR SOURCE OF LIVING WATER

INVITATION

He that shall drink of the water that I will give him, shall not thirst forever, but the water that I will give him shall become in him a fountain of water springing up into life everlasting. (St. John, IV, 13, 14)

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, give me of this water that I may not thirst. (Ibid., verse 15).

Our Lord said to the Samaritan woman: *Give me to drink...* This word encloses a profound and astonishing mystery of Charity. Without a doubt, our divine Savior wished to be subject to the same needs as we are; He wished to be hungry, thirsty, weary and fatigued. In becoming flesh, He took all the weaknesses and infirmities of our flesh, sin excepted; but in the prayer that He addressed to the Samaritan woman, He meant a mystical thirst: *If thou hadst known the gift of God and who it is that says to thee: Give me to drink, perhaps thou wouldest have asked it of Him thyself, and He would have given thee LIVING WATER.*

St. John, IV, 8, 10.

Two kinds of thirst consume the Heart of God: the thirst of receiving from His creature, and the thirst of giving to Him. Our Lord seems to say to

us: I am sadder today and more fatigued than I was at the well of Samaria. For more than nineteen centuries I have pursued your poor humanity. You close your ears to my appeals, and in material springs you seek for water that can never slake your thirst for happiness. I languish with love, and I can find relief only in pouring out upon you the torrents of my grace and of my divine tenderness.

“God being the sovereign good,” says St. Francis de Sales, “takes pleasure in communicating Himself by love, without any kind of profit for Himself; whence He cries out: *They have forsaken me, the fountain of living water and have digged to themselves cisterns, broken cisterns that can hold no water.* As if He said: I complain not that they have forsaken Me because of any injury their desertion can cause Me; but I grieve for their misfortune, that having left Me, they have chosen for themselves wells that have no water.”

The well of Samaria is found again in every Tabernacle: or rather the divine Beggar Who rested at Jacob’s well is still there, calling us and wishing to exchange with us an intimate conversation.

He is the Beggar for our Heart. Under the bread which conceals Him, we find Him as really living as the Samaritan woman saw Him when He asked her to give Him to drink. He thirsts for our heart. Let us go to our Savior, let us appease His divine torment. To touch our hearts, He says to us on the point of dying: *I thirst!* Can one refuse anything to a dying person?... He asks us to give Him to

Jer., II, 13.

*Treatise on Love
of God.* Book
X, ch. 13.

drink when He has just done everything for us, hoping that we will not refuse Him the water for which He asks. — My divine Master, what is this water, that we may give it to Thee? — Jesus answers us: “*I thirst for your love, for your faith in Me; I thirst to do you good, I thirst for your acquiescence in every Will of mine.*”

O my Savior, we also thirst, we thirst for Thee, we thirst to love Thee, to make Thee known and loved, we thirst to make Thee reign! *As the heart pants after the fountains of water, so my soul pants after Thee, O my God. My heart thirsts after the strong, living God.*

Ps. xli, 1, 2.

We come then to Thee, O Lord, Who art “*the fountain of life,*” to draw “*with joy from the fountains of the Savior.*” We press our lips on the wound of Thy adorable Heart, and drink in long draughts the life which flows therefrom.

Ps. xxxv, 10.

They thirsted not in the desert, where he led them out: he brought forth water out of the rock for them, and he clove the rock, and the water gushed out.

Is., xii, 8.

Is., xlvi, 21.

“The Sacred Heart of Jesus is an inexhaustible Source, which seeks only to pour itself into humble and empty hearts, who cling to nothing,” wrote St. Margaret Mary. This adorable Heart WISHES to inundate our souls with the life of holiness of which He is the Source. O my God, Thou dost wish it, and so do I! What then shall prevent my soul from receiving what Thou dost desire to give me? Mistrust alone can prevent it, for mistrust alone closes Thy Heart.

Letters, I, 11,
p. 386.

“I believe, O Lord, I believe... I unite my weak

faith to the confidence of Thy sacred Humanity when it exclaimed: *Father, I know that Thou hearest Me always.* — With this divine confidence, in which my poor confidence is lost, I can expect marvels from Thee. Lord, hast Thou not said: *If any one believes, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water... If any one thirsts, let him come to Me and drink?*... Let us plunge ourselves into this life-giving and sanctifying SOURCE. Let us drink all that we need, let us drink love, the spirit of sacrifice, the spirit of faith, of prayer, of abandonment of self.

St. John, xi, 42.
St. John, VII, 38.

If we have not this holy thirst for God, let us desire it, and let us realize that to desire this thirst for God, is already to thirst for Him. St. Francis de Sales assures us of this: "He who ardently desires to love will soon love with ardor. Oh God! who will give us the grace to burn with this desire, which is *the desire of the poor* and the preparation of their heart, which God willingly hears!"

Treatise on the Love of God, Book XII, ch. 2.

It is above all in the most holy Eucharist that Jesus causes the waters of His love to flow into our souls. Therefore let us go often to receive Him, let us go every day. "You should have frequent recourse to the source of grace and of divine Mercy," he tells us by the author of the Imitation. "to the source of all goodness and purity, in order to be cured of your passions and to merit to become stronger and more vigilant."

Bk. IV, ch. 10.

"Behold I come to Thee, O Lord, to taste the joy of this banquet, which Thy tenderness has prepared for the poor, O my God. In Thee is all that I can and ought to desire."

Imit., Bk. IV, ch. 8.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR JOY

INVITATION

You now indeed have sorrow but I will see you again, and your heart shall rejoice and your joy no man shall take from you. (St. John, xvi, 22).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

As soon as the voice of thy salvation sounded in my ear, my soul leaped with joy. (St. Luke, i, 44).

A Saint said: "When everything fails me, my happiness remains intact, because my God does not fail me, and my God suffices for my happiness." The source of our joy is in fact in the possession of God, and this joy no one can take from us.

Joy, light-heartedness, is the first fruit of our union with our Lord. When we have abandoned everything to Him, our heart is free and joyous, we go to our duties with a light heart because we lean on the Lord Jesus. As has been so well said, to preserve joy, "we have to arrange our little affairs with our Lord." When Jesus is with us, we no longer feel what costs us, we are always joyous. "Love feels no burden, it accounts labor as nothing." Without Jesus, everything is difficult, with Jesus everything is easy.

*Imit., Bk. III,
ch. v, 1.*

The spirit of the Church is essentially a spirit of joy. *The Kingdom of God is justice and peace and joy in the Holy Ghost. Now I go to you, said our Lord to His Father, and for this I pray for My disciples, that their joy may be full.*

Rom., xiv, 17. Our joy is therefore willed by our Lord. It is in our Lord, He is the source of it; He wills that this joy which is in Him should be perfect in us.

St.John, xvii,18. What is it that can give us pain?... Our miseries? St. Francis de Sales affirms that "God WILLS our misery to be the throne of His mercy, and our impotence the seat of His omnipotence." *We are filled in the morning with Thy mercy, and we have rejoiced, and are delighted all our days.*

Ps. lxxxix, 14. Do afflictions or physical sufferings sadden us? Let us say: "It is my Father Who sends me this pain, and He sends it to me because He loves me, to procure an unknown good for me." "We could never be sad if we always looked unto God", said the Bishop of Geneva to one of his spiritual daughters.

The loss of our own dear ones afflicts us... Let us think that those who are said to be dead are living, and that between them and us there is only a veil: dark on our side, but transparent on theirs.

Can darkness or anguish trouble our joy? Let us dilate our souls with the words of the Psalmist: *Behold, Oh Lord! Thou hast known all things, the last and those of old, Thou hast formed me and hast laid Thy hand upon me... Thy hand shall lead me and Thy right hand shall hold me... With Thee, darkness shall not be dark, the night*

shall be light as the day; the darkness thereof and the light thereof are alike to Thee.

Ps. CXXXVIII, 5,
10, 12.

Thy right hand and Thy arm and the light of Thy countenance will give me victory, because Thou lovest me.

Ps. XLIII, 4.

Darkness, anguish, solicitude, trials of all kinds, are for us occasions of making true acts of confidence. "Everything is agreeable to me; provided He is pleased and I love Him, I am satisfied", said St. Margaret Mary.

Autobiography, v.
II, p. 112.

It is a great joy to be a Christian, a child of the holy Catholic Church: to be in a state of grace; to love God, to make an act of love, to do the will of God. A "YES" to the divine will ought to fill us with joy, for *he who adheres to the Lord is made one same spirit with Him.*

I. Cor., vi, 17.

The soul thus given up to God repeats in every circumstance: There is for me neither pain nor pleasure, there is only the divine will. I am as well pleased to be deprived of what I desire as to have it; the possession of that which I desire is no longer agreeable to my heart, if Thy will, O Lord, has not preceded it. Thy good pleasure, O my Master, is my only satisfaction, the sole joy of my heart. Such a soul is truly the "beautiful statue" of which St. Francis de Sales speaks. "A sculptor had placed it in a niche of the gallery of a great prince. If it could reason and talk and if it were asked: — O fair statue, tell me now, why art thou in that niche? It would answer, — Because my Master placed me there. — But why stayest thou there doing nothing? — Because my Master did not place me here to do anything, but simply that I should be here motionless. — But

if one should urge it further, saying: — But poor statue, of what use is it for thee thus to remain there? — Well! would it reply, I am not here for my own interest and service; but to serve my master and maker, and this suffices me. — And if one should still insist thus: — Tell me then, I pray, not seeing thy Master, how dost thou find pleasure in pleasing him? — No, verily would it confess: I see him not, for I have not eyes for seeing, as I have not feet for walking; but I am only too contented to know that my Master sees me here, and takes pleasure in seeing me here. — But if one should continue the dispute with the statue, and say unto it: — But wouldest thou not at least wish to have power to move that thou mightest approach near thy Maker to afford him some better service? — Doubtless it would answer, No, and would protest that it desired nothing but what its Master wished. — Is it possible then, would one say at last, that thou desirest nothing but to be an immovable statue there within that hollow niche? — Yes, truly would that wise statue answer in conclusion: I desire to be nothing but a statue and ever in this niche, so long as my Master pleases, contenting myself to be here and thus since such is the contentment of

*Tr. on Love of
God. Bk. VI,
ch. xi.* him to whom I belong, and by whom I am what I am."

It is then an inexhaustible source of joy to give one's self up entirely to God, to adhere to Him, to abandon one's self to His conduct, to will **ALL** that He wills, to believe in His Love... May we taste this happiness, and sing with the royal Prophet: *As to me, I place my joy in the Lord!*

It is also a joy "*to be nothing*," the more we are nothing, the more God is our all, the more He pours Himself into our soul. It is a great joy then to put the *all* of God in the place of our *nothingness*, by union with God.

"Joy is a humiliation well received, an act of humility which inclines God and His grace towards us, which "elevates Him" according to the expression of the Blessed Grignon de Montfort: "Every time that we abase ourselves, we elevate God." Joy is also a victory over self for Him Whom we love; it is after our faults, to give our Lord the joy and glory of "repairing us."

It is a great joy to make a sacrifice. *They went away full of joy at having been judged worthy of suffering for the name of Jesus.* A suffering is also a joy, because it completes in us *what is wanting to the Passion of Jesus Christ.* *I superabound with joy in the midst of my tribulations.*

"It is a joy to be made conformable to our Lord in His sufferings, in His humiliations, in His Passion, in His death."

"Joy is a service rendered to our neighbor, because we know that it is to God that we render it."

"Joy is also in the Sacraments, in prayer which, as we know, opens for us the treasures of the divine Heart: *Ask and you shall receive, that your joy may be full;* Joy is found in the certainty that if we but ask, we shall receive: *All that you ask My Father in My name, He will give it to you.*

*Treatise on the
true devotion
to Mary.*

Acts, v, 41.

*Coloss. v, 24;
II Cor., vii, 4.*

St. John, xvi, 24.

Ibid., vers. 28.

"What joy to be able to attract divine grace on the world! to make an invocation, an offering of the Precious Blood for the conversion of sinners, for the deliverance of the souls in Purgatory!"

"Perfect joy, — is a holy Communion!... To know what we receive in one Communion, is supreme joy.

"And what a joy is the holy sacrifice of the Mass! One Mass brings enough grace to make a saint. To know what Mass is and to assist thereat, suffices to open the soul to an inundation of joys. To have assisted at a single Mass should be enough to keep a soul for its whole life in the exultation of joy."

After holy Communion especially, we can repeat: "It is now that God the Father loves me;" or like Sarah, who said to Isaac: *Now God has given me a joy and whosoever shall hear it, will rejoice with me.* And it is also true that the Angels rejoice around this holy Sacrament and those who have received it, as St. Chrysostom says."

Joy is JESUS!... it is HIS HEART! It is His reign! *Thou art MY joy, O Lord.*

Bless the Lord, O my soul!... May the glory of the Lord endure for ever!... May the Lord be glorified in all His works!... I will sing to the Lord as long as I live. I will sing praise to my God while I have my being!... Let my song be acceptable to Him.

Rejoice ye just in the Lord... because He is good, His mercy endureth forever! Thou hast made known to me the ways of life, thou shalt fill me with joy with Thy countenance, at Thy right hand are delights even to the end.

Mother Ponnet,
Subjects of
prayer.

Genesis, xxi, 6.

St. Fr. de Sales,
Opus., edit.
Vives, v. III,
p. 198.

Ps. ciii, 1, 31,33,
34.

Ps. xcvi, 12;
cv, 1.

Ps. xv, 11.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR GOOD SHEPHERD

INVITATION

I am the Good Shepherd. The Good Shepherd gives His life for His sheep... My sheep hear My voice; I know them, and they follow Me. (St. John, x, 11-27).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

I will follow Thee whithersoever thou shalt go. (St. Matt., VIII, 19).

The Good Shepherd has three offices to fulfil towards His sheep: He LEADS them, He DEFENDS them, He FEEDS them. Our Lord fulfills perfectly these three functions towards us.

He CONDUCTS us, — He opens the way to us, He walks before us inviting us to follow Him, that is to profit by His example; for He Himself has done all that we ought to do, so that we can imitate and follow Him in all things.

He DEFENDS us against our enemy. — He has placed His cross, His sufferings and His labors as an impregnable barrier between us and the infernal wolf who seeks to devour us.

Finally, He FEEDS us, — He feeds us with Himself, with His Body and Blood, which He gives us as our nourishment.

St. John, x, 3.

He calls His own sheep by their name,— for He knows them individually, He knows their needs, their necessities, this is why He gives a particular life to each. "Behold Me!" He says by the Prophet: I Myself will seek My sheep and will visit them. As the shepherd visiteth his flock, in the day when he shall be in the midst of his sheep that were scattered: so will I visit My sheep, and will deliver them out of the places where they have been scattered in the cloudy and dark day. I will feed them in the most fertile mountains of Israel: I will feed them in the most fruitful pastures, and their pastures shall be in the high mountains; there they shall rest on the green grass, and be fed in fat pastures upon the mountains of Israel. I will feed My sheep and I will cause them to lie down.

Ezech., xxxiv,
11-15.

The weakest sheep, the most languishing, are the best loved of the Shepherd. *The Lord shall feed his flock like a shepherd: he shall gather together the little lambs with his arms and shall take them up in his bosom, and He himself shall carry them who have difficulty in walking.* What words could be more gentle and more tender? — He says also: *I will seek that which was lost and that which was driven away, I will bring again, and I will bind up that which was broken, and I will strengthen that which was weak, and that which was fat and strong I will preserve: and I will feed them in judgment.* And a little further on: *I will make a covenant of peace with them and will cause the evil beasts to cease out of the land and they that dwell in the wilderness shall sleep*

Is., xl, 11.

secure in the forests. I will make them a blessing round about my hill: and I will send down the rain in its season: there shall be showers of blessings: they shall dwell securely, without fear in their country. And they shall know that I am the Lord their God, when I shall have broken the bonds of their yoke and shall have delivered them out of the hand of those that rule over them. See what Jesus does for souls.

Ezech. xxxiv, 16,
25-27.

He does still more. Like the *poor man* of whom the Holy Scripture speaks, *who had nothing at all but one little ewe-lamb which he had bought and nourished up*, the divine Shepherd not satisfied with having become *poor* for us and with having redeemed us, takes care of each of our souls as if we were alone in the world. We grow up "in His house," He treats us as "His children" . . . We not only "eat of His bread" and drink "from His cup," but He Himself becomes our "Bread" in the holy Eucharist, there He satiates us with His precious Blood . . . To the **VERY LITTLE**, — the poor man's sheep was *little*, — Jesus stretches out His arms, they sleep "on His bosom;" still more, it is to them that He opens His **HEART** that therein they may take their rest.

In a village of the Alps, there lived a mother surrounded by a beautiful crown of children, all young, healthy and amiable, with the exception of one, who an invalid, deformed, an idiot, was repulsive to behold. A stranger passed that way; he admired the beautiful family and congratulated the mother: "But, poor mother!" he said, pointing to the little invalid: "This one is the

cause of tears for you, he is a cross to you!" "Oh!" answered the mother, her eyes bathed in tears: "It is this one that I love best."

The more infirm we are, the more readily our Jesus will say in looking at us: "It is this one that I love best" . . . His compassion equals the extent of His tenderness.

If the sheep cannot walk, the Good Shepherd carries it: "I would rather be weak than strong before God," wrote St. Francis de Sales, "because He takes the weak in His arms, and the strong He leads by the hand."

As soon as the sheep sees the wolf, it takes refuge near the shepherd. When the enemy assails us with temptations, let us run to Him Who is the Shepherd of our souls, and let us say to Him: *Hear me, O Lord, for Thy mercy is kind: look upon me according to the multitude of thy tender mercies. They that hope in the Lord shall renew their strength. He that dwelleth in the aid of the Most High shall abide under the protection of the God of Jacob . . . There shall no evil come to thee, nor shall the scourge come near thy dwelling; for he hath given his angels charge over thee to keep thee in all thy ways; in their hands they shall bear thee up: lest thou dash thy foot against a stone.*

The Lord has made the little and the great, He has equal care of all.

The shepherd is always FAITHFUL in keeping his flock; he never abandons it, never fails it; He watches over it lovingly and faithfully. — Thus does our Lord for our souls. — *Thou, Lord, Thou art always the same, Hearken unto Me, he*

Letters, v. XV,
p. 62.

I Peter, II, 25.

Ps. LXVIII, 17.
Is., XL, 31.

Ps. XC, 1, 10, 11-
12.

Wisdom, VI, 8.

says to us, *I have carried you on My shoulder since your birth. Even to your old age I am the same, and to your gray hairs I will carry you. I have made you and I will bear you: I will take you on my shoulders and I will deliver you.*

Is., XLVI, 3, 4.

Thou, O our God, Thou art gracious and true, patient, and ordering all things in mercy.

Wisdom, xv, 1.

The shepherd to guard his flock, often places his staff in the midst of them. The divine staff of Jesus is Mary! it is to this good Mother that we are entrusted. Just as we cannot go to God the Father except by God the Son, neither can we go to our Lord except by the Blessed Virgin. She is the Dispensatrix of divine grace. She is our Mother, all good, all powerful; let us then confide in her. "Mary," says St. Alphonsus de Liguori, "is divine compassion, incarnate in the heart of a mother so as to render it more amiable."

If we feel ourselves unworthy of approaching Jesus, let us go to Mary. We never pray to Mary in vain. "Love, serve Mary, and heaven is yours."

St. Bernard.

"Do little in honor of Mary, if you wish, but do it always." Who can tell the power of an "Ave Maria," especially an "Ave Maria" recited every day... A child of Mary is a child of Paradise. If we wish to die in the love of Jesus, let us live in the love of Mary. — May Mary guard us for the Divine Shepherd... near His Redeeming Heart, in His intimacy, in His love. — O Mary, I confide myself to Thee, defend me as thy good and Thy property. — My Mother, my Confidence! — (300 days indulgence.)

St. John Berch-

mans.

The Lord is my Shepherd, I shall want nothing,

He has placed me in good pasturage. He hath brought me up on the water of refreshment, He hath led me in the paths of justice for His own name's sake. Thy rod and Thy staff have consoled me.

Ps. xxxii, 1-4.

I will remember the tender mercies of the Lord ... I will proclaim His great goodness ... which He has shown according to His kindness and according to the multitude of His mercies. He said: "Yes they are My People, children that will not be unfaithful to me": so He became their Savior. In all their anguish He has been in anguish, and the angels of His presence saved them: in His love and in His mercy He redeemed them, and He carried them and lifted them up all the days of old, and He will still carry them unto the end.

Isaiah, lxiii, 7-9.

We, Thy people and the sheep of Thy pasture, Ps. lxxxviii, 13. will give thanks to Thee forever.

We will show forth thy praise, unto generation and generation.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR GOOD MASTER

INVITATION

The Master is here and calls thee. (St. John, xi, 28).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*My Master! . . . teach me to pray
. . . Good Master what shall I
do? (St. John, xx, 16; St. Luke,
xi, 1; St. Matt., xix, 16).*

What must have been the joy of St. Magdalen when her sister came and said *secretly* to her: *The Master is here, and calls you! . . .* We have nothing to envy the blessed lover of the Savior: At every moment messengers come to tell us, *in secret*, on the part of our Lord: *The Master is her, and calls you!* Every creature of God fulfills this good office towards us; on each one He left His divine mark, not only when He created it, but also when He repaired it as God-Man, by the use He made of it and the blessing that He gave it, for *The Father . . . hath given all things into his hands.* He gave back to them the capacity which they had since the beginning of the world, of leading us to God. Every creature has its secret language to say to us: *The Master is here!* He is in me by His power, by His goodness, by His charity which has created me for you; He calls

St. John, iii, 36.

you, He invites you to use me in order to unite yourself to Him.

St. Francis de Sales teaches souls to search into "the life and Passion of our Lord. By making Him often the subject of your meditation," says he, "your whole soul will be filled with Him; you will imbibe His spirit and you will form all your actions on the model of His... Little children by hearing their mothers talk, lisp at first, and learn at length to speak their language; so we by keeping close to our Savior by meditation, observing His words, actions and affections, shall, with the help of His grace, learn to speak, to act, and to will as He did."

Jesus is our Master, He alone can instruct us: *You call Me Master and Lord*, said He to His Apostles, *and you say well, for so I am*. He often repeats to us what He said to His privileged disciple St. Margaret Mary, showing her His Heart: "Behold the Master I give you, He will teach you all that you ought to do for My love... I will cause you to read in the Book of life, — the Heart of Jesus — wherein is contained the science of love... Abandon all to My good Pleasure, and let Me accomplish My designs without interfering with anything, for I will take care of all. I reserve to Myself the conduct of your interior, and particularly of your heart, in which, having established the empire of My pure love, I will never yield it to any other.

Since Jesus is our Master, let us go to Him to receive His divine instructions. He will teach us what to do in order to follow Him and to imitate Him in His meekness, His humility, and above

*Introduction to
a Devout Life.*

Part. II, ch. 1.

St. John, xiii, 13.

Autobiography, v.
II, pp. 145,
150, 90, 61.

all in His submission, His respect for His Father:

Learn of Me that I am meek and humble of heart, and you shall find peace to your souls. This is His "principal lesson, which He has left us in three words, that we may never forget it, and that we may repeat it a hundred times a day." He will say to us also: "*In patience you shall possess your souls.*" Again He will teach us to accomplish as He did, the least good pleasure of His Father, manifested to us by circumstances, by the accidents of life, or by the will of those who surround us. Then we shall be able to say after Him: *I do always the things that please My Father.*

He will teach us also to act as He did, with regard to our neighbor: that is to say to be only kindness, gentleness and condescension. He will teach us how to bear all, to suffer all and never to make any one suffer. In a word, He will say to us, His friends: "*To please Me, give every satisfaction to this dear neighbor, whom I love and for whom I died of love, for all that you do to the least of my brethren, you do unto Me.*" When we rejoice the heart of our neighbor, we rejoice, so to say, the Heart of our Savior, and God rejoices ours.

How many things we shall learn in the school of Jesus! We shall learn to suffer, to humble ourselves, to love... to die. — *Speak, Lord, for Thy servant heareth.*

I am Thy servant, give me knowledge that I may know Thy teachings; incline my heart towards Thy law. May Thy word fall on me like the dew.

"*Speak, O Lord, Who art the inspirer and en-*

St. Matt., xi, 21.

St. Fr. de Sales,
Letters, v.
XIII, p. 59.

St. Luke, xxi, 19.

St. John, viii, 29.

St. Matt., xxv, 40.

I Kings, III, 9.

Ps. cxviii, 125,
86.

Deut., xxxiii, 2.

lightener of all the prophets, for Thou alone without them, canst instruct me perfectly; but they without Thee will avail me nothing. They may indeed sound forth words, but they give not the spirit. They speak well, but if Thou be silent, they do not set the heart on fire. They deliver the letter, but Thou disclorest the sense; they publish mysteries, but Thou explainest the meaning of the thing signified. They declare the commandments, but Thou enablest us to keep them. They show the way, but Thou givest strength to walk in it. They work only outwardly, but Thou instructest and enlightenest the heart. They water exteriorly, but Thou givest the increase."

"My Son," says our Lord to us by the author of the *Imitation*, "listen to My words, the words of infinite sweetness, which surpass all the science of the philosophers and sages of the earth. *My words are spirit and truth*, and should not be weighed in the balance of human understanding. They must be heard in silence; they must be received in profound humility and with ardent love. *Blessed is the man whom Thou shall instruct, O Lord, and shalt teach him Thy law, that Thou mayest give him rest from evil days.*

St. John, vi, 64.

Ps. xciii, 12, 13.

Imit., Bk. III,
ch. 111.

Ps. xlii, 8, xxiv,
4, 5.

Ps. cxlii, 10.

Imit., Bk. III,
ch. 111.

"Lord, who am I that I dare to speak to Thee? I am Thy poor little servant, I am poorer and more despicable than even I know or dare to say. But, turn not thy countenance away from me, and delay not Thy visit," . . . *Send Thy light and Thy truth, . . . direct me in Thy truth and instruct me, for Thou art God my Savior. Teach me, O Lord, to do Thy will, "to live Thy presence worthily and humbly, for Thou art my Master."*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR MEDIATOR

INVITATION

Whatsoever you shall ask the Father in My name, that I will do: that the Father may be glorified in the Son! Ask and you shall receive. (St. John, XIV, 18; XVI, 24).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Lord, I know that whatever Thou wilt ask of God, God will immediately give it to Thee. (St. John, XI, 22).

What confidence, what love should not this consoling promise of our Lord excite in our souls! Not only did He love us, and place Himself between the jusstice of God and us when He was on earth, but He still continues to interest Himself in our affairs and to recommend them to His Father; therefore He said to His Apostles, who were afflicted at His departure: *It is expedient to you that I go. — For you I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world; again I leave the world and go to the Father, and this also is for you.*

There is one God, and one Mediator of God and men, the man Christ Jesus... He is Mediator of a better alliance, which is established on better promises.

St. John, XVI, 7.
28.

I, Timothy, II, 5.
Hebr., VIII, 6.

His union with human nature gives to our Savior every right to espouse the cause of man, for whom His power with His Father is continually exercised. *Having, therefore, a great high-priest that hath passed into the heavens, Jesus the Son of God: let us hold fast to our confession.* For we have not a high-priest who cannot have compassion on our infirmities; but one tempted in all things such as we are, without sin. Let us therefore go with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace in seasonable aid.

For every high-priest taken from among men is ordained for men in the things that appertain to God, that He may offer up gifts and sacrifices for sins; Who can have compassion on them that are ignorant and that err: because He Himself is compassed with infirmity. And therefore he ought, as for the people, so also for Himself, to offer for sins. Neither doth any man take the honor to himself, but he that is called by God, as Aaron said. So Christ also did not glorify Himself that He might be made a high-priest: but He that said unto him: Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten thee. As He saith also in another place: Thou art a priest for ever according to the order of Melchizedech.

Who in the days of His flesh, with a strong cry and tears, offering up prayers and supplications to Him that was able to save Him from death, was heard for His reverence: And whereas indeed He was the Son of God, He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And being consummat-

ed, He became, to all that obey Him, the cause of eternal salvation. Called by God a High-priest.

Hebrew, iv, 14-16; v, 1-10.

Therefore, the more miserable we are, the more our divine Savior accomplishes towards us His office of Mediator. The smaller, more insufficient, impotent and weak we are, the more He will have pity on us. And if any one has sinned, says St. John, *we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the Just. He is Himself a victim of propitiation for our sins... If we confess them, God is faithful and just to pardon them.*

I Eph., II, 1, 2;
I. 9.

Let us go to our divine Mediator and say to Him: "Behold a soul who is in the world an object for the exercise of Thy admirable mercy, to show forth this mercy in presence of heaven and earth. I will glorify Thee by proclaiming how good Thou art towards sinners; by making known that Thy mercy exceeds all our malice, that nothing is capable of exhausting it, that no relapse should cause the sinner to despair of pardon. I have offended Thee grievously, O my amiable Redeemer; but it would be much worse if I did Thee the horrible outrage of thinking that Thou art not good enough to pardon me. Even if I should have fallen a hundred times and if my sins were a hundred times greater than they are, I would still hope in Thee." *If Thou, O Lord, should mark iniquities, who could stand before Thee? But with Thee is pardon... mercy... and plentiful redemption.*

Ven. P. de la
Colombière
Letters.

Ps. cxxx, 7.

Our Lord is our Mediator and our Advocate, at all times, in all places, at every moment; but in the Holy Eucharist, how divinely He fulfills this double office!... It is there that He is really present

to the attentive and vigilant soul, who prays to Him; there, pleading our cause, He repeats the prayer that He made before dying: *Father, it is for them that I pray; keep them in Thy name, whom Thou hast given to me. Sanctify them in truth.. Father I will that where I am they also whom Thou hast given Me may be with Me.*

St. John, xvii, 9,
11, 17, 24.

It would be too little to have recourse to our divine Mediator for ourselves only. Let us embrace all souls in our prayer; let us offer them to the Father through Jesus. His Heart "is all powerful to give them peace!"... If He wishes to be honored it is above all "in order to renew in souls the effects of His Redemption," making Himself their MEDIATOR. The whole extent of His power is needed to obtain for them mercy and the graces of salvation and sanctification that He has such a great desire of spreading abroad in abundance." The dear privileged one of Paray proclaims that soul "blessed" who desires to become a *Mediatrix*, by supplicating God to make "the most merciful Heart of the Savior known and loved," Who in His turn, will make Himself the "Mediator" of the *Mediatrix*.

St. Margaret
Mary, *Letters*,
v. II, p. 800,
821.

Ibid., p. 828.

Near the Altar, at the Holy Table, we are all-powerful. Let us love to present to the God of all sanctity, the Heart of the Redeemer, saying to Him with a prophet: "*Hear, O our God, the prayer*" of Thy well-loved Son, "*and the supplications*" of His Heart. "*For love of Him, let Thy countenance shine upon us... Incline Thy ear and hear; open Thy eyes and see*" this Heart! "*For it is not for our justifications that we present*

*our prayers before Thy face, but for the multitude
of Thy great mercies. O Lord, pardon, hearken
and do! delay not for Thy own sake, and “for the sake of this broken Heart” which is ours!*

*There is no other Savior but Thee... Thou art He
Who pardons.*

Daniel, ix, 17-19.

Ps. L, 19.

Isaiah, XLV, 21.

Ps. CII, 3, 4.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS THE LAMB OF GOD

INVITATION

*With desire I have desired to eat
this Pasch with you before I
suffer. (St. Luke, xxii, 15).*

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Behold the Lamb of God Who
takes away the sins of the
world. (St. John, i, 29).*

On the eve of His death, Jesus wished to give to His own a supreme testimony of His love. He wished to give them a memorial of His passage in their midst: He instituted the true Pasch. The Blessed Sacrament of the Eucharist was the summary of all that Jesus had done for us; this Sacrament was truly the Testament of love of our divine Savior. When we love, we need to be near the heart of our loved one.

Jesus had finished His mission on earth; He was to ascend to His Father; He left us all His merits, but He alone could apply them; therefore in the Holy Eucharist He became our *Emmanuel*. He was impelled to give Himself as the food of our souls, because He knew that we could not have life but in Him; therefore He became our Bread. He knows that we cannot go to the Father but by Him; He wishes to be our Pasch... His

love could no longer contain itself... *With desire I have desired to eat this Pasch with you.*

Our Lord repeats these words to us every day, and in order that we may go to Him with full confidence, He reveals Himself to us by those which His minister pronounces, when holding Him in His hands: *Behold, the Lamb of God, behold Him Who takes away the sins of the world.* The Priest does not say: 'Behold the Lion of the tribe of Juda, the Jehovah of Sinai,' but: *Behold the Lamb of God.* It is the LAMB Who comes...

How gentle a lamb is! There is no familiarity that we would not permit ourselves with a lamb.

When we possess Jesus, we will say to Him with St. Francis de Sales: "O holy and divine Lamb! How miserable I am without Thee! Alas! I am clothed only with Thy wool, which hides my misery from the face of Thy Father."

If Jesus wills to be our Lamb of expiation every day of our life, He will be so above all when we are nearing the term of our earthly exile. When the anguish, the apprehensions of death, seize us, let us reflect that our divine Lamb, our Redeemer will be there to purify us, to cover us with His Blood; He will be our Savior before being our Judge. At that last moment, Jesus will give Himself to us to be our true *passage*; He will cause us to pass from death to life, and abyss us in Himself for all eternity. He will say to us: "I have desired with a great desire to eat this Pasch with you."

Letters, v. XIII,
p. 186.

St. John, iv, 10. Then only will we understand the *Gift of God*,

the Gift of the Eucharist; We will understand these words of Jesus to St. Gertrude: "The fruits of the Eucharist are immense. Holy Communion compensates for all the spiritual losses of the soul, provided It be received in a state of grace. Yes, when drawn by the vehemence of the love of My Heart, I enter by Holy Communion into a soul that is not in mortal sin, I fill her with blessings; and all the inhabitants of the earth, all the souls in Purgatory feel at the same time some new effect of my goodness."

The Heart of St. Gertrude.

Let us communicate often, let us live familiarly with our divine Savior, and we shall not fear death. The holy Cure d'Ars said to his parishioners: "When you are at the point of death, receive Communion, in order that God the Father seeing in you His divine Son, will be incapable of condemning you." Let us not fear death; why should we fear to fall into the arms of our kind Father, of our faithful Friend, of our Savior? Is it what precedes death that frightens us?... Is it the agony?... Let us not fear, Jesus will be there, He will fortify us; He has always helped us in the most painful moments of our lives; He will be there to make us pass from this land of death to true life... And then after this passage, we shall see our Savior!... What a sight!... how this thought comforts and encourages us to pass through the painful moments of the agony!... Let us live heart to heart with our Lord while we are here on earth! then we shall be able to say to Him at the hour of death: "My God, I am not afraid, it is not the first time that I have found myself

alone with Thee." Let us be happy at the thought that our good God alone will judge us; if our judges were men, we might fear; but with our good God, we will put all our trust in Him and we will not fear.

A young woman of the world, on the point of appearing before God, exclaimed, in desolation: "Oh! I have done nothing for heaven, my hands are empty" . . . One of the assistants seized the crucifix hanging on the wall, and put it into the hands of the dying woman, saying: "Now Madam, see, they are not empty." A person threatened with a sudden death fell asleep every night with his Crucifix in his hands, saying: "My God, if Thou callest me to Thee during this night, behold what I will present to Thee."

Such are the sentiments of confidence that we ought to excite in ourselves in thinking of death. Death is a benefactor, who tears away the veil that separates us from God; it is the hand that closes our eyes to open to us the fatherland; it is the sunshine, the spring sunshine, which breaks the envelope of the humble chrysalis, to give it the wings and the flight of the butterfly; it is, according to the expression of Holy Scripture and of the Church, the sleep which prepares us for an immortal awakening; it is the beginning of true life; it is the leap of the child into the arms of its Father. Let us then be consoled.

"Oh my Saviour! how beautiful will that day be, when Thy minister bringing us the holy Viatum, says to us: *Behold the Lamb of God!* . . . *Behold the Bridegroom cometh!* That day will be

beautiful, because we shall be very near to losing ourselves in Thee. "Oh! how sweet it is to die after having had a tender and constant devotion to Him Who is to be our Judge."

"My God, I accept with a submissive and willing heart whatever kind of death it may please Thee to send me, with all its anguish, pains and sorrows."

St. Margaret
Mary, *Letters*,
v. II, p. 624.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS DESPISED AND UNKNOWN

INVITATION

The world was made by Him and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not.—I looked for one that would grieve together with me and for one that would comfort me. (St. John, 1, 10, 11; Ps. LXVIII, 21).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

Father, the world hath not known Thee, but I have known Thee. (St. John, XVII, 25).

Our Lord passes through the ranks of humanity by His benefits, by His Providence and by His laws. He stops, He raps at the door of each heart, and asks from it the share of honor He has the right to demand. How many Absoloms dethrone and expel Him! How many Semeis blaspheme Him!—Shall we remain unmoved witnesses of this daily scene? Shall we leave the Sacred Heart alone repeating, under the sting of the insult, the prophetic word: “I looked in vain for one to console Me in My sorrow.”

“No, no!” exclaims St. Margaret Mary, for she had heard the touching complaint of the Savior. — She relates that one day after Holy Communion, her divine Spouse presented Himself to her under

the figure of the *Ecce Homo*, bent under His cross, all covered with wounds and bruises; His adorable Blood ran down on all sides. He said to her in a voice sad and painful: "Is there no one to pity Me, no one who will compassionate My sorrows and share them, in the pitiful state in which sinners have placed Me?" And Margaret Mary prostrating herself at His feet, offered herself with tears and sighs.

We also will present ourselves. — But what shall we do to repair so many injuries? Their malice is infinite, and we, poor, miserable creatures, already debtors to the divine Majesty by so many personal faults, what shall we offer Him to compensate for those of the whole world? Homage? Praise? The Holy Spirit answers us that the divine Majesty surpasses all praise, and in the mouth of the sinner, praise has no charm...

What shall I do?... Ah! I know, St. Margaret Mary has told me her Master's secret. Once when she was deplored her helplessness, suddenly our Lord, allowing an ardent flame to escape from His Heart, said to her: "Behold what will supply for all that you lack... When I make known to you that divine Justice is irritated against sinners, you will come and receive Me in Holy Communion; and having placed Me on the throne of your heart, you will adore me prostrate at my feet, you will offer Me to My Eternal Father, as I shall teach you, to appease His just anger and implore His mercy to pardon them."

Every time we go to Holy Communion, the Heart of Jesus not only lends us Its flames, He

really gives Himself to us entirely. As by the Incarnation, He gave Himself to humanity, and procured for us and brought to us with Himself all His wealth, says St. Paul, so in the Holy Eucharist He gives Himself with all that belongs to Him to those who receive Him: His sufferings, His actions, His virtues, His merits, all become our property, our treasure, which we can use as we please. Therefore, after Holy Communion, we can look calmly at our Lord and say to Him: Now, O my God, I can offer Thee a gift which Thou canst not disdain, and which will indemnify Thee abundantly for all our outrages: the Heart of Thy beloved in Whom Thou art well pleased. Look at Him in me.

"One of the dominant characteristics of the mortal life of the Word made flesh, is the flight from the world and the love of seclusion. He is often seen gathering together His apostles for a private conference: *Come apart.* Ever the same in His Eucharistic life, our Savior Jesus gives evidence that there, as in Judea, his predilection is for recollection and for heart to heart conversations with His own.

"Notwithstanding the liberality of the holy liturgy to multiply the days of Exposition, the Benedictions and the processions of the Blessed Sacrament, His normal life, the ordinary days and nights of our Eucharistic Jesus are passed, according to the constant attraction of His mortal life, in silence. But it would be going contrary to every desire of the Heart of Jesus to change into isolation a silence whose only end is to favor the

P. Tissot, *Dis-*
courses, v. I.

St. Mark, vi, 31.

intimacy of our conversations with THIS DIVINE FRIEND. If He hides Himself, it is to make us seek Him; if He veils His splendor, it is that we may approach Him without fear; if He imprisons Himself in His humble dwelling, it is to await our visits there. *I looked for one that would comfort Me...* How small is the number of comforters!... From His Tabernacle, the divine Master exclaims by the mouth of the Psalmist: *I am become a stranger to my brethren. — I am forgotten as one dead from the heart...* And He is not dead in His Sacrament, He is full of life. Night and day, at every second, His Heart beats for us and palpitates with the desire which is the characteristic of love, the desire of seeing those whom He cherishes approach Him.

“The visit to the Blessed Sacrament is then the principal form of devotion that the perpetual presence of Jesus in the Tabernacle imposes on us; such is the testimony of love that we must offer as often as possible to the Guest of our temples, so neglected and unknown!...”

Let us often visit our divine Master, and if we cannot always go to the Church, at least let us often transport ourselves in spirit to the foot of the Tabernacle where Jesus is alone, waiting for us...

Perhaps He may reiterate to us, His intimate friends, the request that He made to Margaret Mary, “to rise every Thursday between eleven o’clock and midnight in order to participate in His mortal sadness in the Garden of Olives, and to implore mercy for sinners.”

If we cannot pass one hour of *the night* with

Ps. LXVIII, 9.

Ps. XXX, 13.

Tissot, *Discourses*, v. I.

Autobiography, v.
II, p. 78.

our Savior, at least let us consecrate to Him some moments of Thursday evening, to compassionate His sufferings in Gethsemane and to unite ourselves with His Heart, to implore mercy from His Father, saying to Him for ourselves and for all mankind: *Spare, O Lord, spare Thy people.* *Joel, ii, 17.*

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE IS YOUR FRIEND

INVITATION

You are My friends if you keep My Commandments. I will not now call you servants, but My friends. (St. John, xv, 14, 15).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

My Well-Beloved is chosen out of thousands... He is all lovely and He is my Friend. (Cant., v, 10, 16).

“If we meditated profoundly on the Gospel, if we read the Gospel more frequently, how quickly we should be convinced of the Master’s desire of “being *familiar* with us”, of being treated as a Friend!

“The Savior” says St. Francis de Sales, “is the FRIEND OF FRIENDS.” “Without a friend we cannot be happy; and if Jesus is not our dearest Friend, we shall be in sadness and desolation.” He is the true Friend, the faithful Friend at all times.

A Friend is the confidant, the counsellor, the joy of life. This is what Jesus wants to be for each of our souls and for each of our homes. He wishes to be to us what He was in Bethany: the incomparable Friend.

I am not alone, said the good Master, *for My Father is with Me*. So we can say: I am not alone,

P. Mathéo, *Cal.
to the Aposto-
late of the S.H.*
(Lyons).

*Tr. on the Love
of God, Bk.
VIII, ch. IX.*

*Imitation, Bk.
II, ch. VIII.*

St. John, xvi, 32.

Jesus, my Friend, is with me! — No, no, we are never alone, never strangers in this world; we are of the family of our Lord, we are the privileged children of His Heart.

First of all, Jesus must be the Friend of our heart, He must be its CONFIDANT; let us pour our sorrows into His Heart, — a pain loses its bitterness when it has been confided to some one. If we weep over souls, as Martha and Lazarus did over Magdalen, let us speak to Him about them, let us beseech Him to lead them back to Him. Have we solicitudes, embarrassments, even material ones?... Let us tell Him *all*... “We must speak to our Lord very familiarly about our little wants, pointing them out to Him... communicating with Him familiarly about our little affairs... Planning everything with Him, high as well as low... little as well as great... Opening our heart to Him and pouring it out before Him, until it is empty in His presence; relating to Him our works, our sins, our desires... and taking our repose with Him as with a friend to whom we confide and lay bare all our affairs, good as well as bad. This is what Holy Scripture calls *pouring out one's heart as water* in the divine presence, manifesting to God not only what is great, but also the very smallest”...

*Works of St. de
Chantal, t. III,
p. 525, 529.*

When Blessed Gabriel Perboyre was Superior, one of his religious, suffering under the pressure of violent anguish, went to him for some consolation: “Why do you not rather go to our Lord!” said Blessed Gabriel. “What can I say to you? Our Lord has so many consoling and comforting words for you! Go then to Jesus!”

May Jesus, our Friend, be our CONSOLER. The Savior is the faithful Friend, His counsels are full of sweetness, "they are sweeter than honey... Learn of Him all you ought to do, do nothing without His advice; for He is the *faithful Friend* Who will lead and govern and take care of you..." There is no useful or efficacious counsel outside of Him. He is called *the Angel of the great counsel*. Is., ix, 6.

St. Francis de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Bk. VIII, ch. ix; *Conferences*, v. VI, p. 101.

If the divine Friend is our Confidant, our Counsellor, He is also the SWEETNESS of our life. "In fact, the soul which has given herself to Him, seems no longer to see in Him anything but the attributes which invite her to love Him, and to place in Him all her confidence. She no longer sees God as a judge, as an avenger, but as the best of Fathers, the most tender of Spouses, THE MOST INTIMATE FRIEND. She speaks to Him with holy familiarity, she confers with Him about her affairs, she confides to Him all her troubles. One must have experienced it, to know what is the ease, liberty. THE SWEETNESS of this converse HEART TO HEART with God." "Every subject of displeasure will become a trifle to you when you learn to have such a FRIEND, such a great support, so excellent a refuge."

P. Grou, *Treatise on the Gift of Self*.

St. Francis de Sales, *Letters*, v. XV, p. 247.

Perhaps we may say: "It is true that Jesus merits all my love by His infinite loveliness; but something else is necessary for the generosity of my heart... It is not enough for me that the Friend should do everything for me, I want, in my turn, to be useful to Him, I would like to be able to render Him some service — I would like to have Him whom I love, once in a while at least, ask of me, a consolation, a comfort, a sacrifice... I

would like Him to need me. Now, Jesus cannot realize this condition, since He reigns in the unalterable felicity of His eternal glory."

"Alas! Let us undeceive ourselves. If Jesus is the most faithful, the most devoted, the most loving of friends, He is also supereminently the most abandoned . . .

"His essential glory, His essential happiness consists in the unspeakable greatness, in the ineffable delights of His divine essence, and of His perpetual communications with the Father and the Holy Spirit in the bosom of the unfathomable depths of eternity. Nothing can take from Him nor even diminish this glory, this essential happiness. But Jesus Christ has also a glory, an accidental happiness which consists in being more or less known, loved and adored by His creatures. This glory, this happiness depends on us . . .

"Is our Lord Jesus Christ known, honored and loved as He ought to be or as He could be? . . . Without speaking of reasonable creatures who do not know Him, without speaking of those who have not been adopted by Him in holy Baptism and who blaspheme Him because they do not know Him, does He receive from the so-called nominal faithful the homage of veneration and love to which He is entitled? Does He receive it from us, His privileged ones?

"Oh! if the utmost sorrow for a friend burning with love is to be misunderstood, abandoned, betrayed, despised, insulted by his own, Jesus is certainly here below the most sorrowful of friends . . .

"Jesus lives in the poor, whom He calls and who really are His suffering members. Under the unnumbered miseries which know no relief, our faith reveals to us the Sacred Humanity of the Savior and His divine Heart weeping and suffering, saying: *I am hungry and no one gives me to eat; I am thirsty and no one gives me to drink!...*

"Jesus lives also in His Vicar... the Sovereign Pontiff, whom Mgr. de Segur so justly calls "the ostensorium of Jesus Christ."... Behind the venerable heart of the Holy Father, calumniated tried, persecuted, oppressed, filled with bitterness, the Heart of Jesus OUR FRIEND shows itself, making us hear these heart-rending sighs: "All abandon Me, all despise Me!... For those who despise My Vicar, despise Me... *Who despises you, despises Me.*"

St. Luke, x, 16.

"Finally, Jesus OUR FRIEND lives corporally, really in the Tabernacle. *You who pass by* ^{Lamentations, 1, 12.} enter the Church, *and see if there is* on earth a more abandoned friend than Jesus in the Blessed Sacrament!

"Alone, always alone! Oh! the sad lot of a heart that loves!... It is the lot of Jesus. — Does He often have pious visitors? Are they many, who without neglecting the duties of their state, are willing to deprive themselves of an instant of their multiplied recreations to come and keep a moment's company with the isolated Heart of Jesus?...

"Insulted by His friends, oh! what a frightful torment!... Is Jesus never insulted in the Sacrament of His love?

"Betrayed by those one loves! Oh! horrible injury!... Does Jesus never receive at the Holy Table the kiss of Judas?... When He comes burning with love to enrich His children, does He always have the consolation of being received worthily?..."

"Oh! it is incumbent on us, children of the Sacred Heart, to keep Jesus company!... By frequent and pious visits, by an exemplary life, by fervent and numerous Communions, by the act of reparation often repeated, by the devotion of the first Friday faithfully kept up, let us console the broken Heart of our Divine FRIEND..."

"I ask you," said our Lord to St. Margaret Mary, "that the first Friday after the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament be dedicated as a particular feast to honor My Heart."

It is not only the Friday in the Octave of the Blessed Sacrament that should be a feast, but every Friday, and especially the first Friday of each month...

The friends of the Sacred Heart hear His appeal; hence they have a marked predilection for this first Friday. — And this preference is justified by a request and by a solemn promise of the Savior: Jesus, showing Himself to His beloved disciple all surrounded with glory, His five Wounds as brilliant as five suns, asked her for a homage of reparation. Among the practices of this devotion He indicated to her the Communion of the first Friday of the month: "You should communicate every first Friday of each month."

As to the promise, St. Margaret Mary transmits it to Mother de Saumaise in these terms: "I promise that in the excessive mercy of My Heart,

P. Tissot, *Discourses*, v. I.

Autobiography, t. II, p. 110.

Ibid., p. 72.

My all-powerful love will grant to all those who communicate nine successive first Fridays of the month, the grace of final perseverance, that they will not die in My disfavor or without receiving the Sacraments, for My Heart will be their assured refuge at the last moment."

Ibid., p. 897.

A Saint said: 'I would be satisfied in Paradise with an uninterrupted succession of *first Fridays of the month*.' Because on the first Friday well sanctified, there is Holy Communion, which is heaven; the consecration of self to God, which is heaven; finally the bitter-sweet joy of the Act of Reparation. — The Divine Heart has an ardent desire that each first Friday of the month should be a feast-day, a day of intimacy for those who are His friends. Let us respond to His desire and console Him by our homage of loving reparation.

If Jesus wishes to be the Friend of our heart, He wishes also to be the FRIEND OF OUR HOMES. He wishes to be established there as the Master, the continual resource, the daily Friend; therefore He desires that His image should be the Center of the Home. He has promised to His privileged Confidant that "He will shed His blessings with abundance in every place where the Image of this adorable Heart is loved and honored."

Letters, v. II, p. 296.

It is not enough for Jesus to be the Guest of our Home, for His Image to be placed there; all the members of the family must love Him, honor Him and treat Him as a true FRIEND.

To love and honor Him is to show one's self in all and above all a PERFECT CHRISTIAN, it is to give Him the first place in our works, in our

words, it is to obey His will. You are My friends.

St. John, xv, 14.

He says to us, *if you do the things that I command you.* To treat Him as a Friend is to do

Ibid., verse 5.

nothing without Him: *Without Me,* says our divine Savior, *you can do nothing;* to treat Him as a Friend is to understand His love, it is to believe in His love, it is to comprehend the language of His love, revealed to us by every manifestation of the divine Will. *I will not now call you servants, for the servant knoweth not what his Lord doth; but I have called you friends, because all things whatsoever I have heard of My Father, I have made known to you.*

St. John, xv, 15.

Let us study Jesus, let us love Jesus, let us speak of Jesus, of His Heart; let us live for Jesus... Let Him be above all our best FRIEND, our Counsellor in our doubts, our Corrector in our faults, our Consoler in our pains, our Refuge in our falls, our Treasure, our Strength during life and at the hour of death — He wishes to be incomparably *all* for us! *To whom have you likened Me, He says by His prophet, and made me equal, and compared me and made Me like?*

Is. xlvi, 5.

Let us have no other preoccupation than that of loving Him and causing Him to reign, this incomparable Friend. "Love has more value in His eyes, it is more profitable to the Church and to the soul itself than all other works combined."

St. John of the Cross.

Our FRIEND, our Beloved, our joy here below, will be our FRIEND, our Beloved, our reward for all eternity. In heaven, pressing us to His Heart, this unequalled FRIEND, will say to us: *I am the First and the Last.*

Apocalypse, I,
17, xxii, 18.

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

HE WISHES TO BE YOUR KING

INVITATION

*Behold thy King cometh to thee,
meek.* (St. Matt., XXI, 5).

ANSWER OF THE SOUL

*Thou art my King and my God
(Ps. LXXXIV, 4).
My heart hath uttered a good
word; I speak my works to
the King.* (Ps. XLIX, 1).

Each soul, each member of a family can sing with the Spouse of the Canticle of Canticles: *The King hath brought me into His store-rooms: we will be glad and rejoice in Him, we will celebrate His love.*

Chap. I, 3.

“What are the store-rooms of this KING OF LOVE but His Heart which abounds in every variety of sweetness and delight... Worldly princes keep their treasures in the cabinets of their palaces, their arms in their arsenals, but the heavenly Prince keeps His treasure in His bosom... His weapons in His breast... His treasure is His goodness,... His weapons are His loves...

“The soul then which by love holds her Savior in the arms of her affections, feels the thrillings and movements of an incomparable joy, through the content which she has in beholding the

treasures of the perfection of the King of her holy love; but especially when she sees that He Himself discovers them by love, and that amongst them that perfection of His infinite love excellently shines. Has not this soul reason to cry: O my King, how lovable are Thy riches and how rich are Thy loves! Oh! which of us has more joy, Thou that enjoyest it, or I who rejoice thereat?... We both enjoy it, since Thy goodness makes Thee enjoy my rejoicing, and my love makes me rejoice in Thy enjoying."

Treatise on the Love of God, Bk. V. ch. II.

Jesus wishes to reign!... He is a *King full of gentleness*... He wishes to reign by Love... He wishes to reign over souls, He wishes to reign over families, He wishes to reign over the world, He wishes to be in the world the **KING OF LOVE**. The *Adveniat regnum tuum* must become the respiration of our life.

Appeal for the Apostolate of the Sacred Heart, Lyons.

R. P. Matheo never ceases to repeat that we do not know our Lord; and that consequently we do not love Him... we keep distant from Him... We say to Him: Do Thou remain in the Tabernacle, while we live out here... still further distant is our ordinary life!... And Love is not loved!... No, He is not loved!!! The *Love of Jesus Christ* is not preached enough, and yet it is a *soul... a flame... a life!*...

By meditating on the Gospel we shall penetrate into this mystery of the Charity of Christ. The Gospel is for us the **BOOK OF LIFE**, containing the **SCIENCE OF LOVE**. "Wherever you go," said Father Matheo to the apostles of the Sacred Heart, "engage persons to read the Gospel, to meditate

on the Gospel... to *read between the lines* of the Gospel. This is the means of knowing thoroughly Him Who is only love, sweetness and goodness, Him Whose mercy appears, at every instant, with an ineffable delicacy. When we have understood, *with our heart*, the scenes of Bethany, the Prodigal Son, Magdalen, the Samaritan Woman, the woman taken in adultery... and so many others... it will become impossible not to feel that a confiding love has taken birth in our soul, with the desire of living in close intimacy with so gentle a Master, Who knows only how to cure, to raise up, to save and to pardon, but never how to condemn."

Opus. quoted.

"O true God! how amorous is the divine Heart of our love!... He is not content with announcing publicly His extreme desire to be loved, so that every one may have a share in this sweet invitation, but He even goes from door to door, knocking and protesting: *if any man shall hear my voice and open to me the door, I will come in to him and will sup with Him and he with me*, that is, He will testify all sorts of good will towards him... But behold this divine Lover at the gate; He does not simply knock, He calls the soul: *Arise, make haste; and puts His hand into the key-hole to see if He cannot open it.*"

Apoc., III, 20.

Cant., II, 10, v. 4.

St. Francis de Sales, *Treatise on the Love of God*, Bk. II, ch. VIII.

Alas! how many are there who answer, as formerly St. Augustine did, saying, "Presently, presently, wait a while." As to us. let us follow the counsel of the St. Francis de Sales: "Do not say to your Friend, Jesus Christ, Who waits at the door and who knocks: "Go, and return

Sermons, v. VII, p. 90.

Prov., III, 28.

Tobias, IX, 4.

Spiritual Directory.

Ps. xcv, 7, 8, 10,
XLVI, 3.

Ps. xxi, 28, 29.

P. Grou, Pensées chrétiennes.

tomorrow," when you can open to Him at once. If you knew... with what great affection our Lord awaits you!... He counts the days, and if you wait one day longer, *His soul will be afflicted.*"

Let us open wide our doors to Jesus, and when we receive Him in Holy Communion, let us proclaim Him KING AND SOVEREIGN LORD of our whole being. Let us "look at Him seated in our heart as on His throne," says St. Francis de Sales, "and bring before Him, one after another, our powers and our senses to hear His commands, and to promise Him fidelity."

When we enthrone His Image in our homes, in the place of honor, let us proclaim Him the Head and King of our Families. We shall no longer be in *our home*, but in *His HOME*. It is family by family that the world must be consecrated to the King of Love. *Bring to the Lord, FAMILIES OF PEOPLES; bring to the Lord honor and glory; bring to the Lord the glory due to His Name — because of His goodness and His fidelity. — Say to the nations: the Lord is the great King: All the families of nations will prostrate in His presence, for sovereignty belongs to the Lord, and He will rule over all nations.* (1)

"I beseech you", says a well-known author, not to serve the King of kings as earthly kings are served, at certain times and moments; serve Him constantly, with confidence, joy and love, every day of your life, until your last breath."

(1) French tr. Gaume.

Christ Jesus is Lord of lords and King of kings, and they that are with Him are called elect, and faithful.

Apoc., xvii, 14.

Sing praises to our God, sing ye; sing praises to our King, sing ye, for God is the King of all the earth.

Ps. xlv, 7, 8.

I will extol Thee, O God my King, and I will bless Thy Name forever.

Ps. cxlv, 1.

To the King of ages, immortal, invisible, the ONLY GOD, to Jesus Christ our Lord, to His Sacred Heart, be praise, honor and glory for ever and ever. I. Tim. i, 17. Amen.

CONTENTS

Letter of His Eminence Cardinal Mercier	I.
Letter of His Eminence Cardinal Bourne	II.
Letter of His Grace Archbishop Curley	III.
Letter of His Lordship Mgr du Bois de la Villerabel	IV.
To the Reader	1

DRAW NEAR TO JESUS

He desires only your love	5
He wishes to be sought	9
He is your Sanctity	13
He is your Sufficiency	19
He is your Redeemer	25
He is the Guest of your Soul	29
He is the Bread of Life	35
He is abandoned	39
He is your Savior	43
He wishes to realize His divine promises in you	47
He is your Consoler	51
He is your Physician	55
He is your Remedy	59
He is the Son of God	65

He is your Repose	-	-	-	-	-	69
He is your Way	-	-	-	-	-	73
He remains with you always	-	-	-	-	-	77
He is your Kind Father	-	-	-	-	-	81
He is your Treasure	-	-	-	-	-	85
He is your Peace	-	-	-	-	-	97
He is your Domain	-	-	-	-	-	91
He alone is capable of satisfying your heart	-	-	-	-	-	101
He is the Bread of God	-	-	-	-	-	109
He is your Heaven	-	-	-	-	-	115
He is the Gift of God	-	-	-	-	-	119
He is your Source of living water	-	-	-	-	-	125
He is your Joy	-	-	-	-	-	129
He is your Good Shepherd	-	-	-	-	-	135
He is your Good Master	-	-	-	-	-	141
He is your Mediator	-	-	-	-	-	145
He is the Lamb of God	-	-	-	-	-	151
He is espised and unknown	-	-	-	-	-	157
He is your Friend	-	-	-	-	-	163
He wishes to be your King	-	-	-	-	-	171

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